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# Mental Health in Boston

## Boston Public Health Commission

## April 2001

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# Data Highlights

**Need for Mental Services Among Adults**

- One in 8 Boston adults reports poor mental health on more than 7 of the last 30 days.
- One in 6 Boston adults reports binge drinking 1 to 4 times during the past month.
- One in 9 Boston adults age 18 to 24 experienced physical violence in the last 12 months.
- One in 2 homeless adults served by BPHC's Homeless Services have at least one major psychiatric disorder.
- There has been 25% increase over the last three years in Boston 911 calls requesting services for an "emotionally disturbed person".
- One in 9 Boston adults reported not receiving needed mental health services for self or family member.

**Need for Mental Services Among Children & Adolescents**

- One in 5 Boston high school students seriously considered suicide; 1 in 13 attempted suicide.
- One in 6 Boston high school students reported binge drinking in the past 30 days.
- One in 6 students reported using marijuana in the past 30 days.
- A small percentage of students reported using cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, and inhalants.
- Between 1996 and 1998, BEST reported a 44% increase in the rate of male youth requiring services, and a 32% increase for girls.
- Last year alone, BMC Pediatric Emergency Room reported treating 88 suicide attempts and 370 cases of interpersonal violence among youth under 19.
- Over an 18-month period, the waiting lists for DMH child mental health case management services increased by almost 50%.
- Wait times for placement in an outpatient mental health service have increased by more than 200% since 1998 for patients in pediatric psychiatric hospitals.

Table des figures

# Data Highlights (cont.)

**Barriers: Adults**

- The leading barriers identified by residents who did not obtain needed mental health services were related to denial of problem (32%), lack of health insurance (27%), and cost (17%).
- Eleven percent of Boston adults are uninsured, with a higher percent of non-insured among non-white populations (21% uninsured Hispanics, 15% uninsured Blacks, 9% uninsured Asians, and 8% uninsured Whites).
- Between 30% and 50% of outpatient mental health facilities have average wait times of more than 2 weeks for counseling and medication appointments.
- Language capacity at in-patient pediatric facilities is limited for patients who do not speak either English or Spanish.
- Forty percent of Boston youth in summer school and city recreation programs would not seek help from a professional counselor if they were having emotional problems.

**Public Health Issues**

- Psychosis is the 3rd leading cause of hospitalization for Boston adults.
- Substance abuse is the 4th leading cause of hospitalization; rates are 3 times higher for males than for females (7.4/1000 vs.. 2.0/1000).
- Between 1991 and 1999, there were 398 deaths from suicide to Boston residents; 308 suicides among males and 90 suicides among females.

Data Hamiltaire (cont.)

# Introduction

The prevalence and impact of mental health problems are often under-recognized. The "burden of disability" of mental illness has been equated to that of heart disease and cancer as a cause of disability in the U.S.[1] Although mental illness spans age, gender, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic groups, disparities exist in access to services among these groups.

Data Sources for this report include:

- Surveys of adults and youth
- Medicaid data
- Emergency department records
- Hospital discharge files
- Death records
- Homeless services program data
- Emergency Medical Services records

[1] Healthy People 2010 ref. Murray, CJL, and Lopez, AD. *The Global Burden of Disease.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996.)

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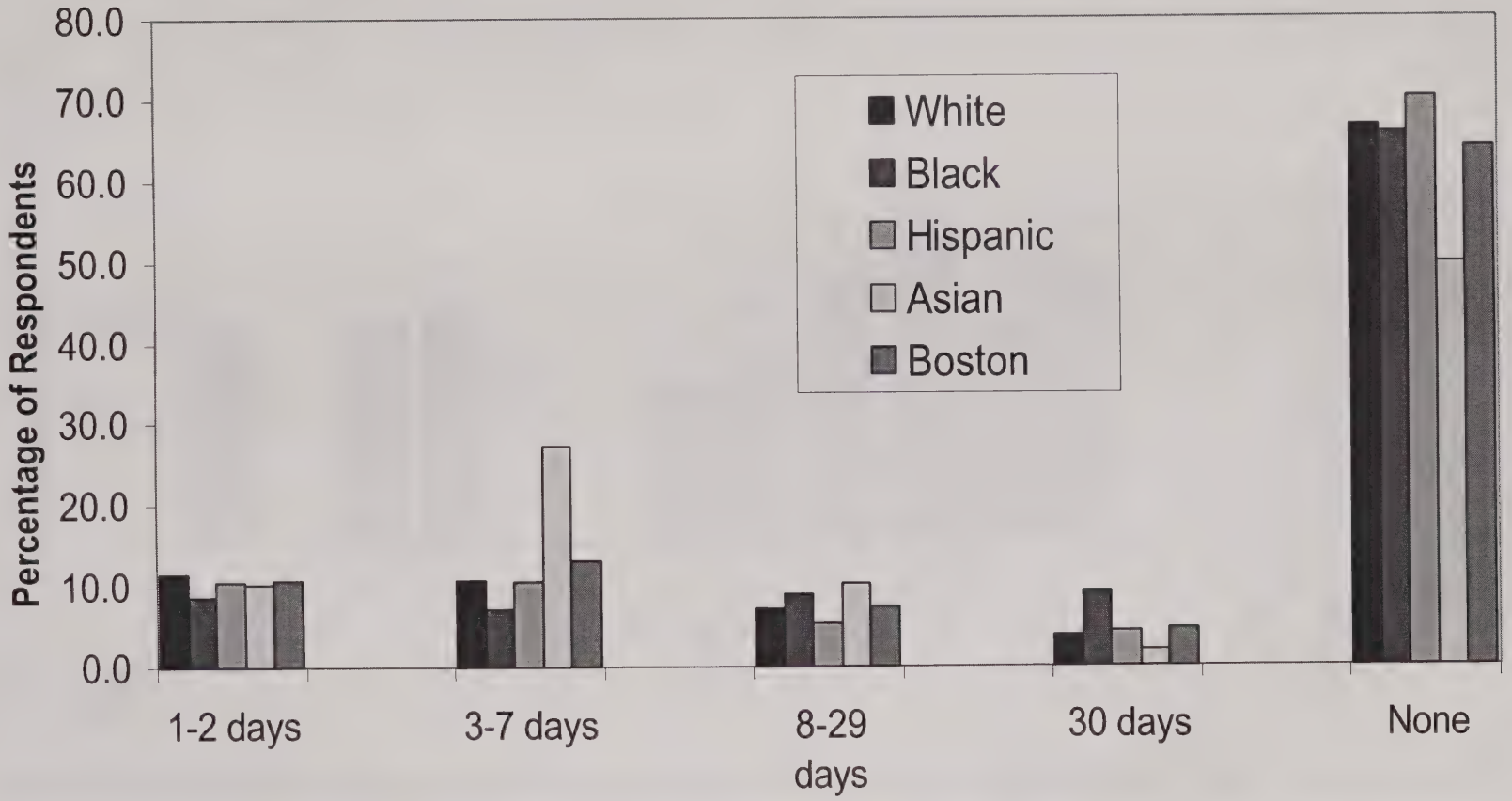
https://archive.org/details/mentalhealthinbo00bost

# Adult Mental Health

## Measures of Emotional Well-Being

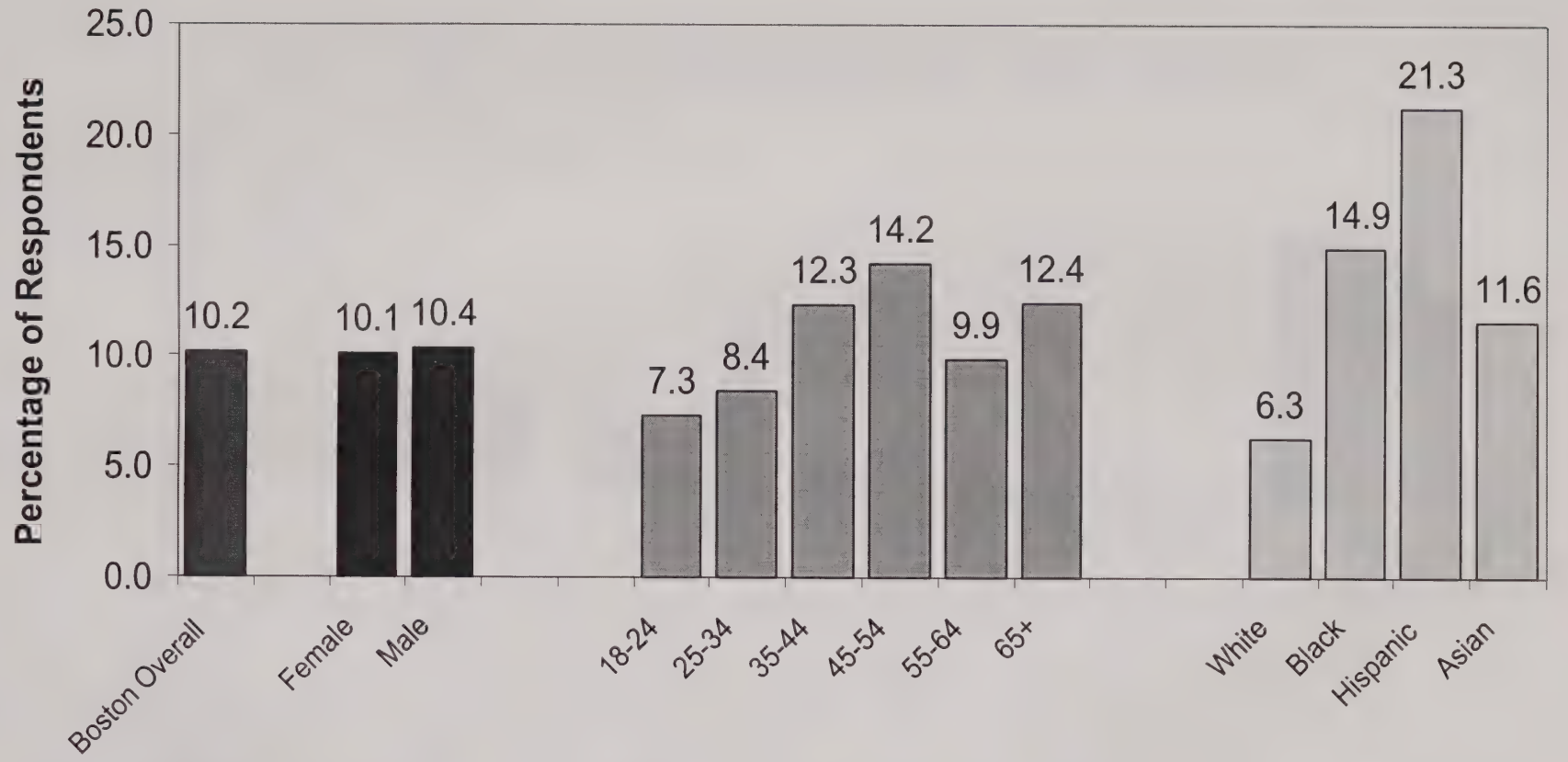
# "How Many Days of the Past 30 Days Was Your Mental Health Not Good?" by Race/Ethnicity, Boston Adults, 1999




SOURCE: Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 1999, Boston Public Health Commission & Massachusetts Department of Public Health

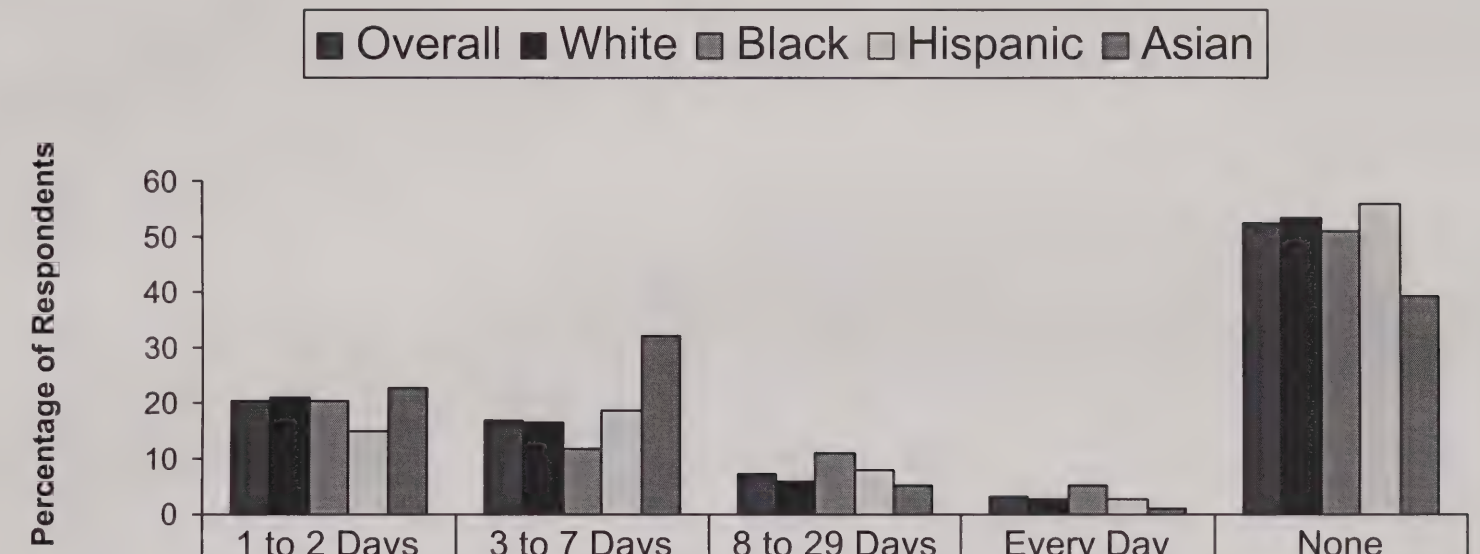
ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

# "Rarely" or "Never" Have Social or Emotional Support, Boston Adults, 1999




SOURCE: Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 1999, Boston Public Health Commission & Massachusetts Department of Public Health
ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

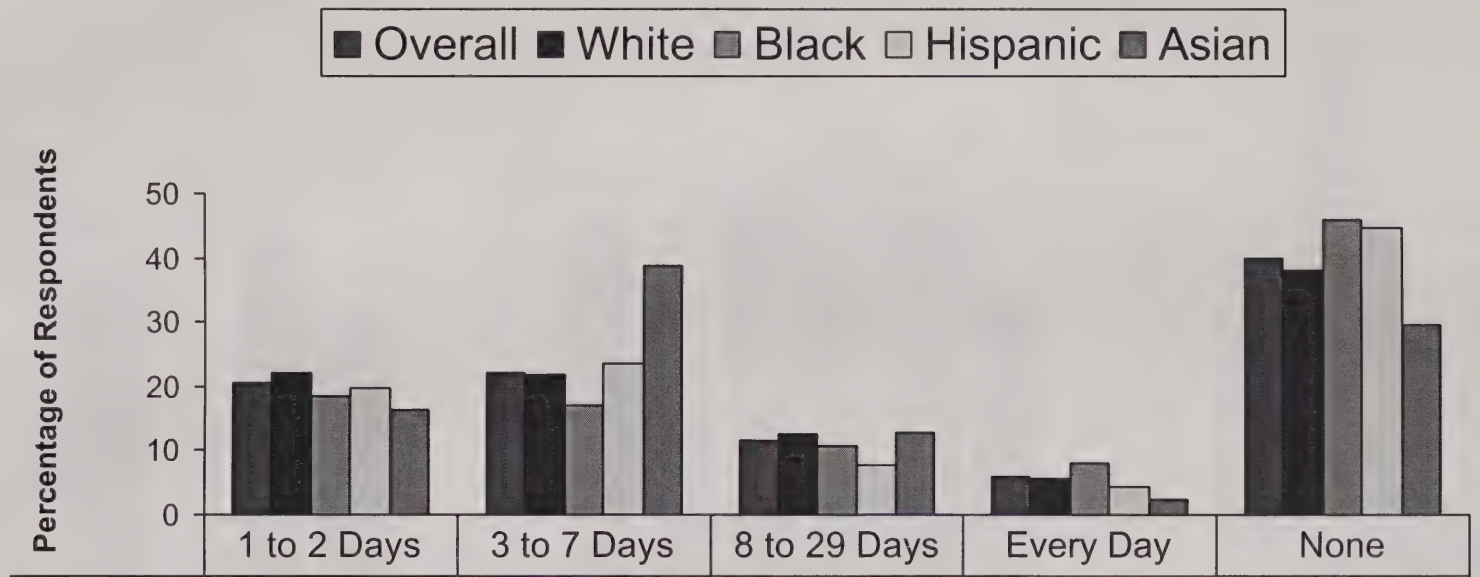
# Depressed Feelings, by the Number of Days They Occurred During the Past Month, Overall and by Race/Ethnicity, Boston Adults, 1999




| | 1 to 2 Days | 3 to 7 Days | 8 to 29 Days | Every Day | None |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Overall | 20.3 | 17.0 | 7.1 | 3.1 | 52.5 |
| White | 21.2 | 16.6 | 5.9 | 2.9 | 53.5 |
| Black | 20.5 | 11.8 | 11.0 | 5.1 | 51.0 |
| Hispanic | 14.9 | 18.5 | 8.1 | 2.9 | 55.7 |
| Asian | 22.7 | 32.1 | 5.1 | 1.0 | 39.3 |

SOURCE: Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 1999, Boston Public Health Commission & Massachusetts Department of Public Health
ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

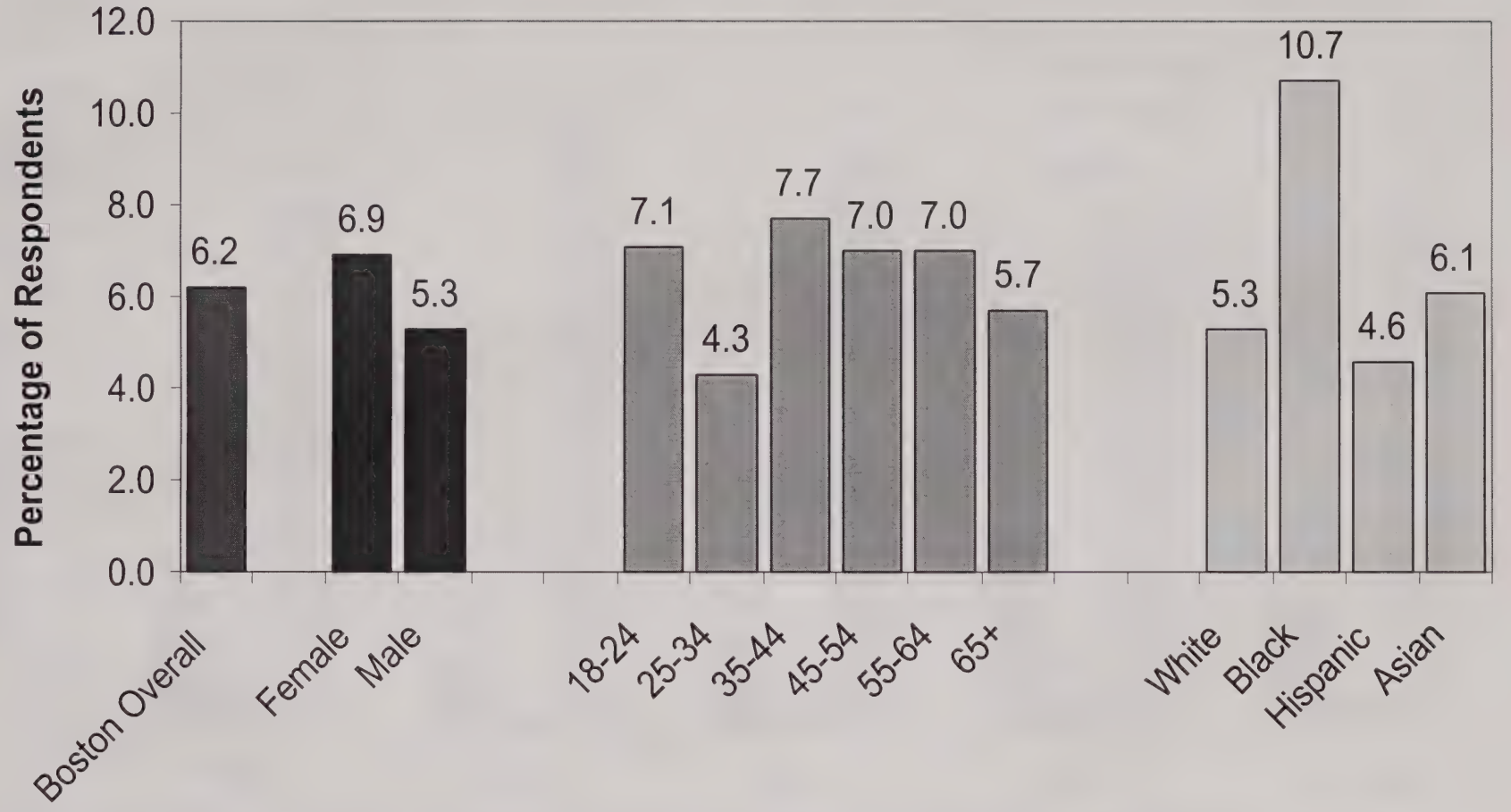
# Anxious Feelings, by the Number of Days They Occurred During the Past Month, Overall and by Race/Ethnicity, Boston Adults, 1999




| | 1 to 2 Days | 3 to 7 Days | 8 to 29 Days | Every Day | None |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Overall | 20.5 | 21.9 | 11.6 | 6.1 | 39.9 |
| White | 22.1 | 21.6 | 12.5 | 5.7 | 38.2 |
| Black | 18.5 | 16.9 | 10.8 | 8.1 | 45.7 |
| Hispanic | 19.7 | 23.6 | 7.6 | 4.5 | 44.5 |
| Asian | 16.4 | 38.8 | 12.8 | 2.4 | 29.5 |

SOURCE: Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 1999, Boston Public Health Commission & Massachusetts Department of Public Health
ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

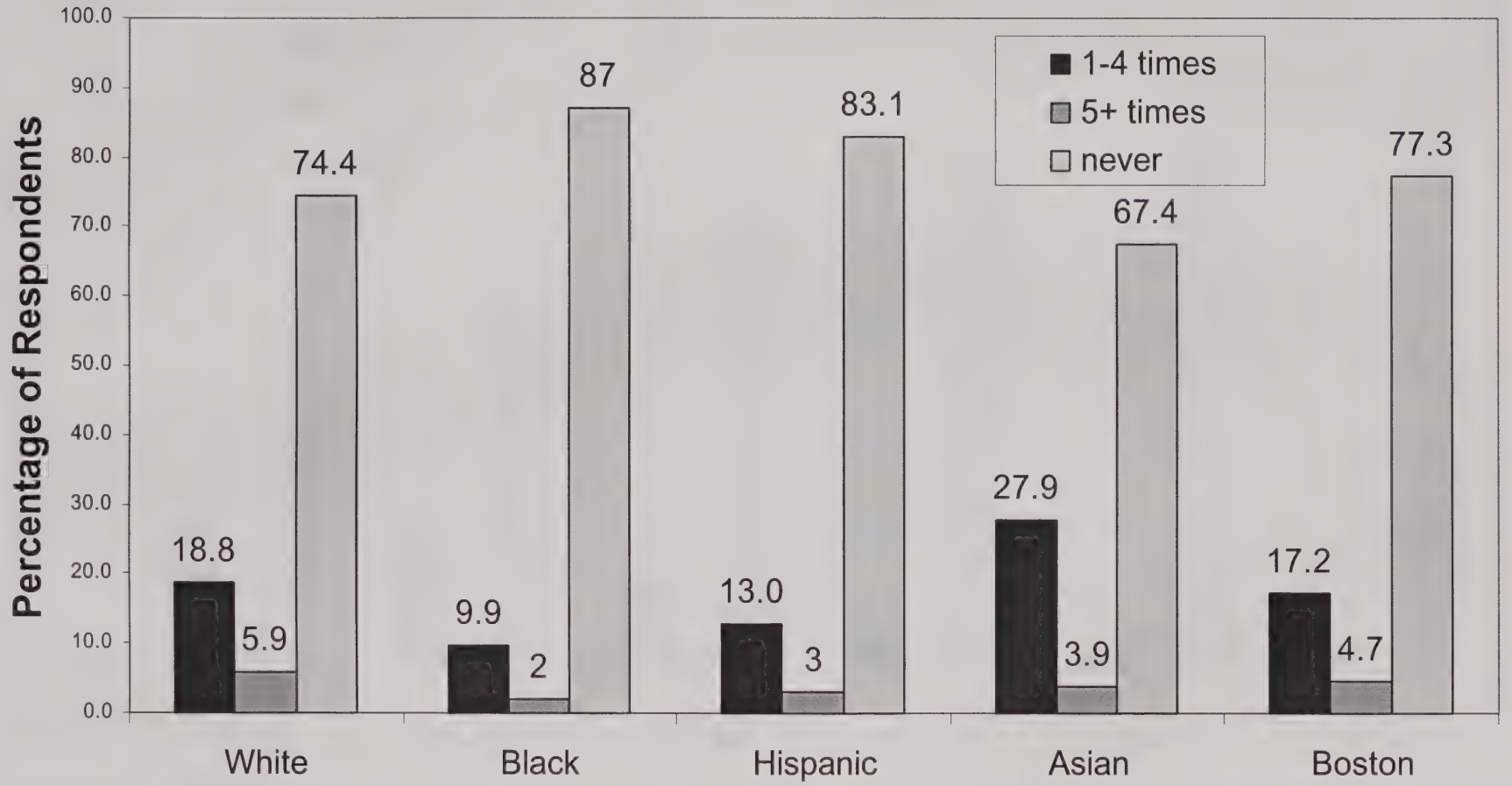
# "Dissatisfied" or "Very Dissatisfied" with Life , Boston Adults, 1999




SOURCE: Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 1999, Boston Public Health Commission & Massachusetts Department of Public Health

ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

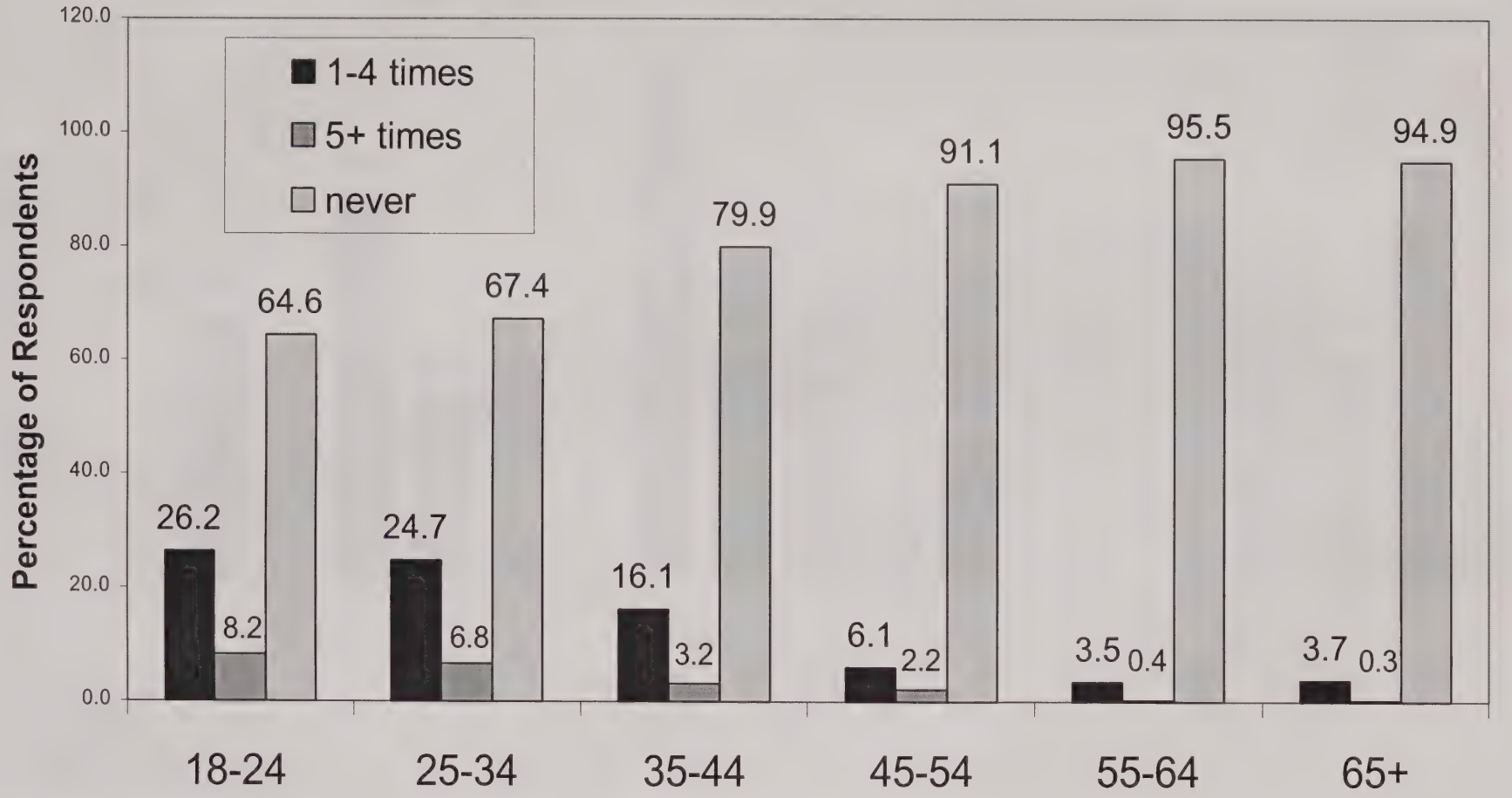
# Frequency of Binge Drinking During Past Month by Race/Ethnicity, Boston Adults, 1999




SOURCE: Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 1999, Boston Public Health Commission & Massachusetts Department of Public Health

ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

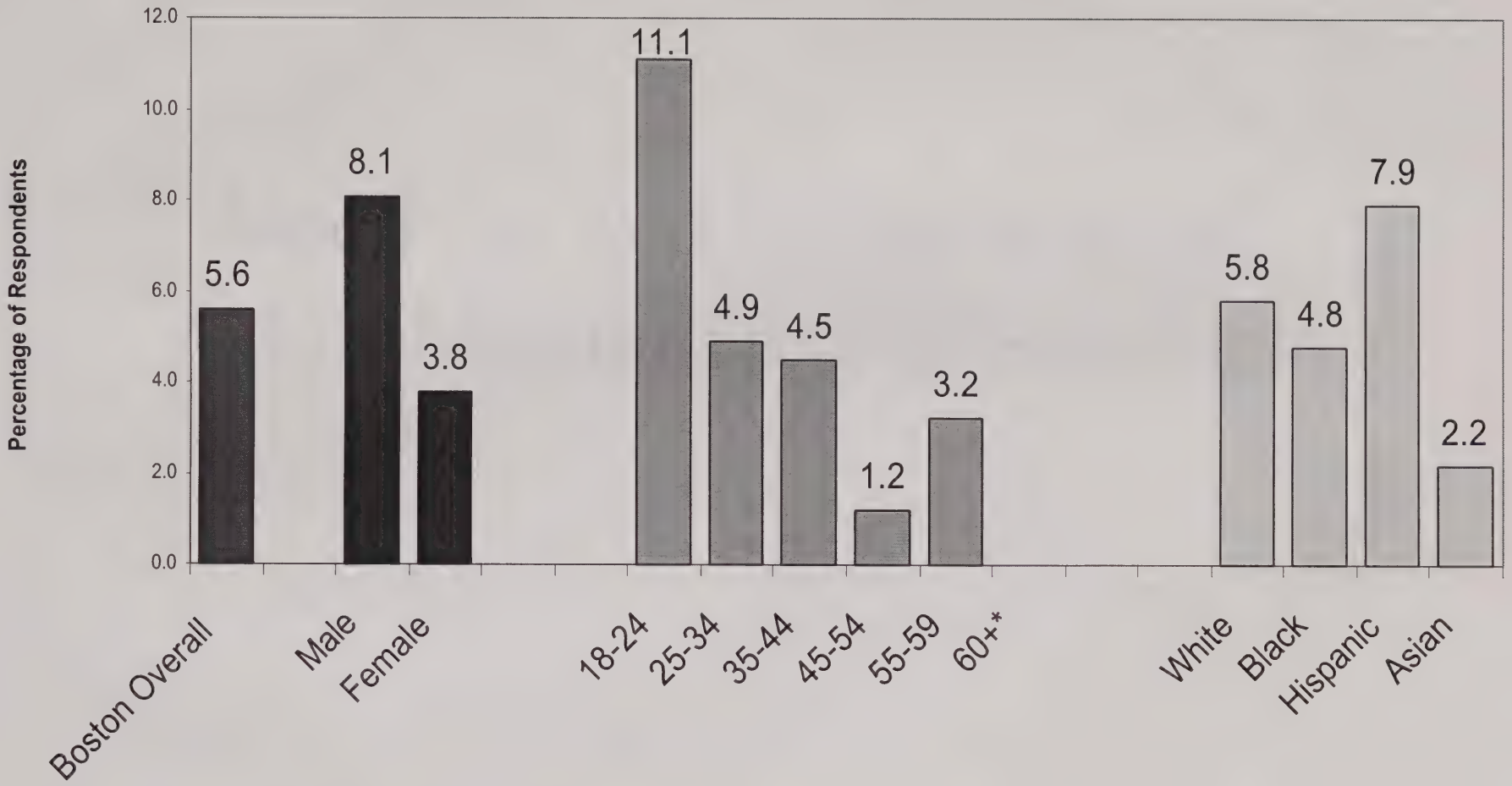
# Frequency of Binge Drinking During Past Month by Age Group, Boston Adults, 1999




SOURCE: Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 1999, Boston Public Health Commission & Massachusetts Department of Public Health

ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

# Experienced Physical Violence in Last 12 Months, Boston Adults, 1999



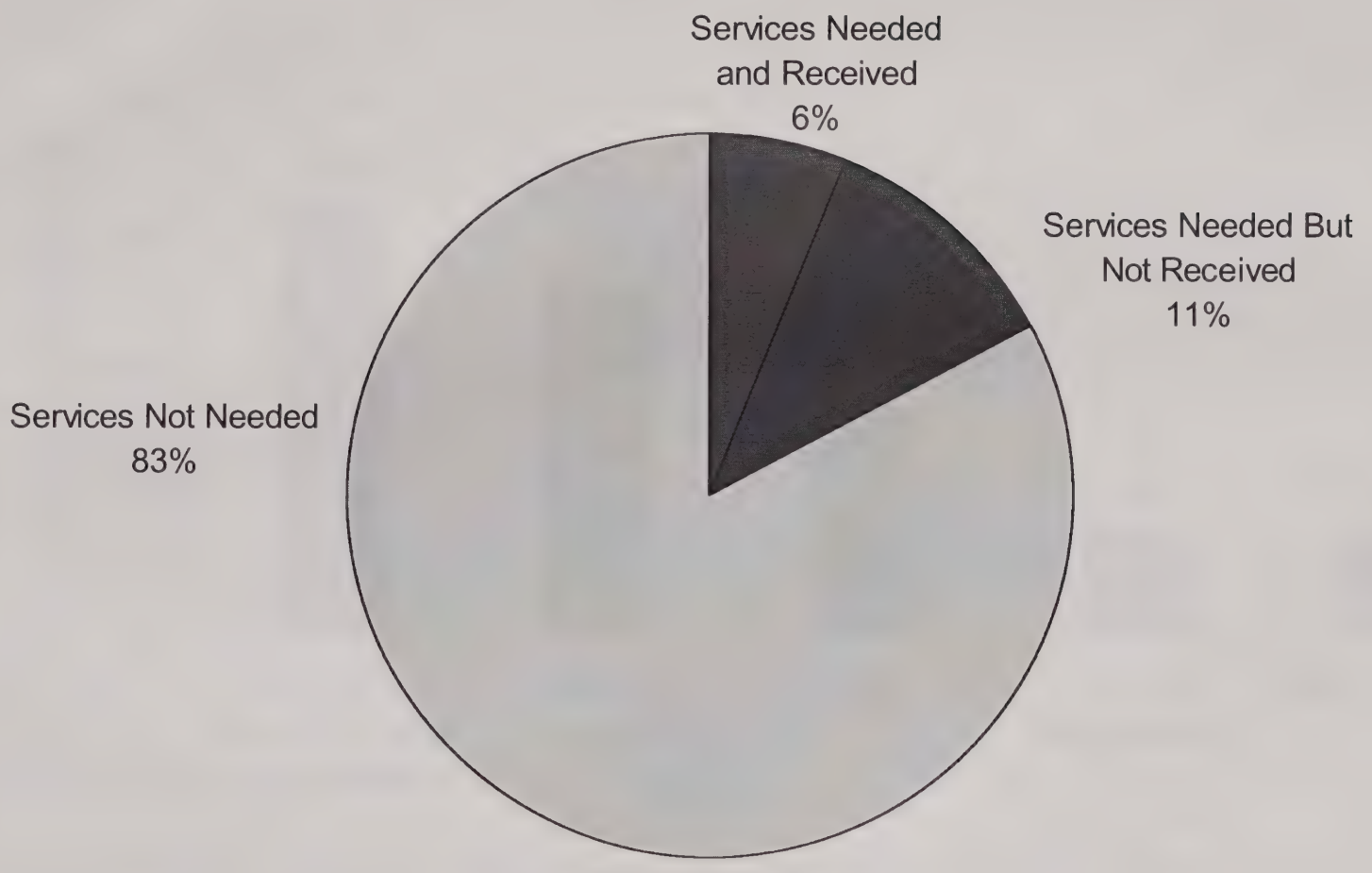

*Respondents aged 60 years and older were not asked this survey question.

SOURCE: Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 1999, Boston Public Health Commission & Massachusetts Department of Public Health

ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

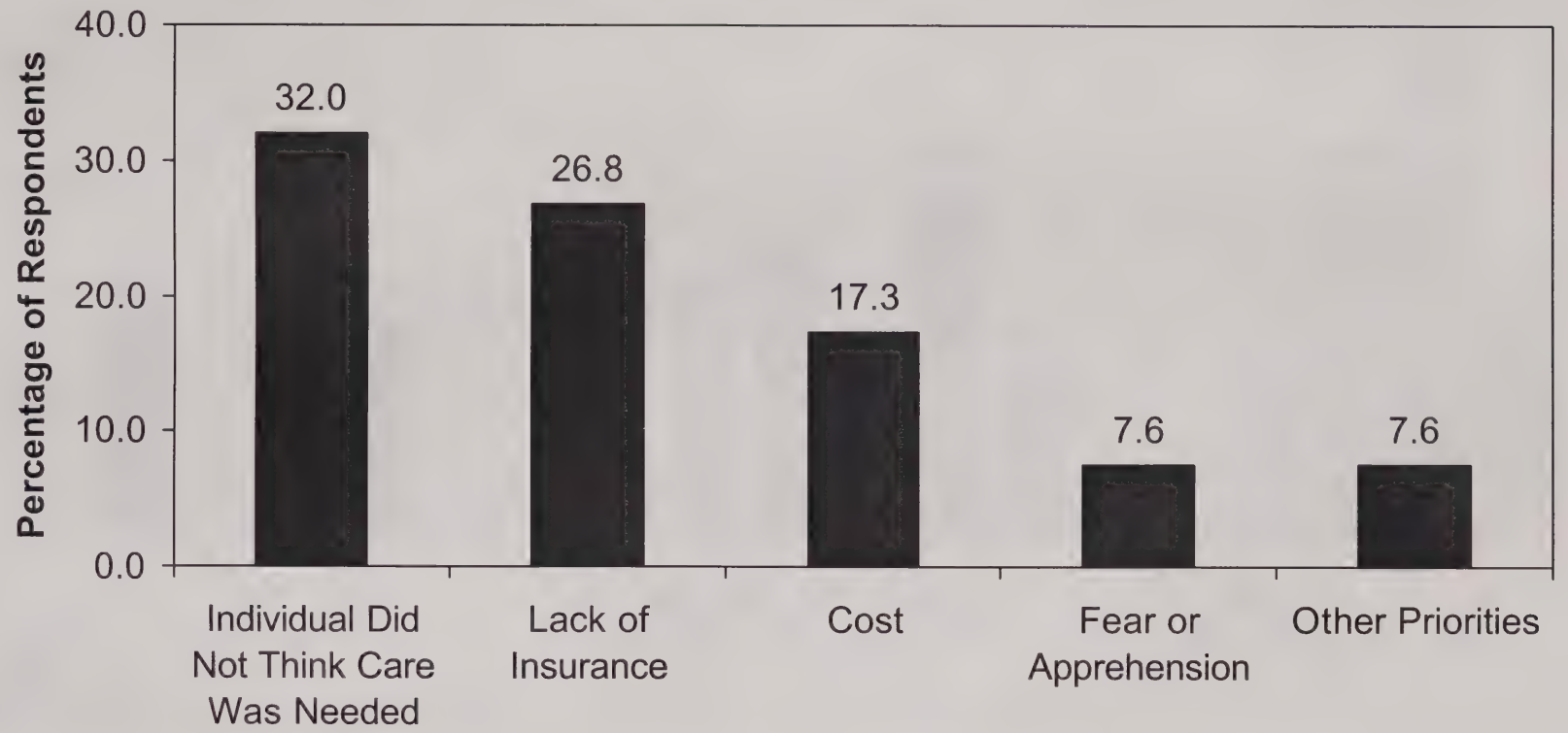
# Need for and Utilization of Adult Mental Health Services

# Need for and Utilization of Mental Health Services in Past Year by Household, Boston, 1999



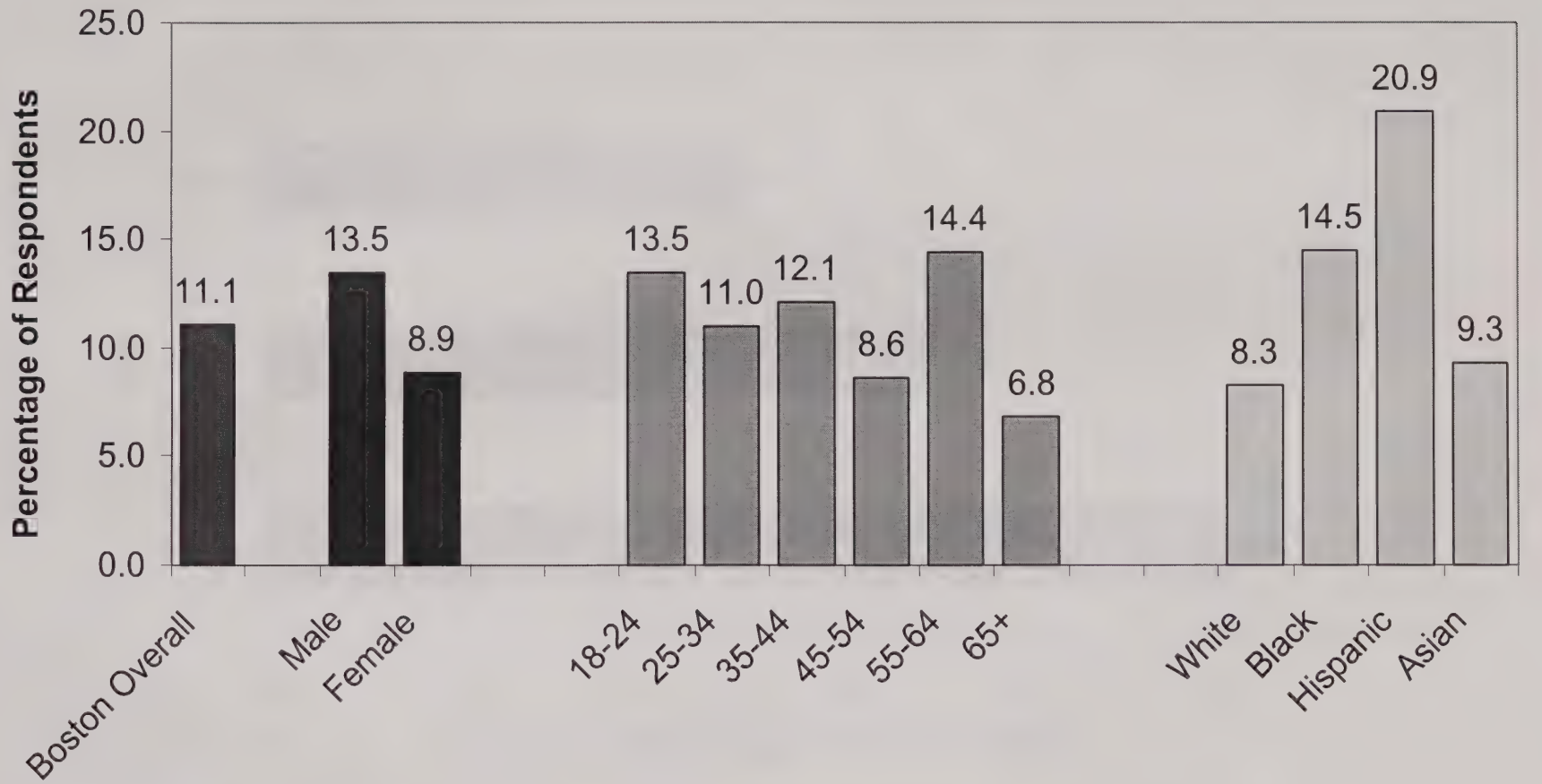

SOURCE: Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 1999, Boston Public Health Commission & Massachusetts Department of Public Health
ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

# Reasons Mental Health Services Were Not Received by Household Members in Need of Care, Boston, 1999



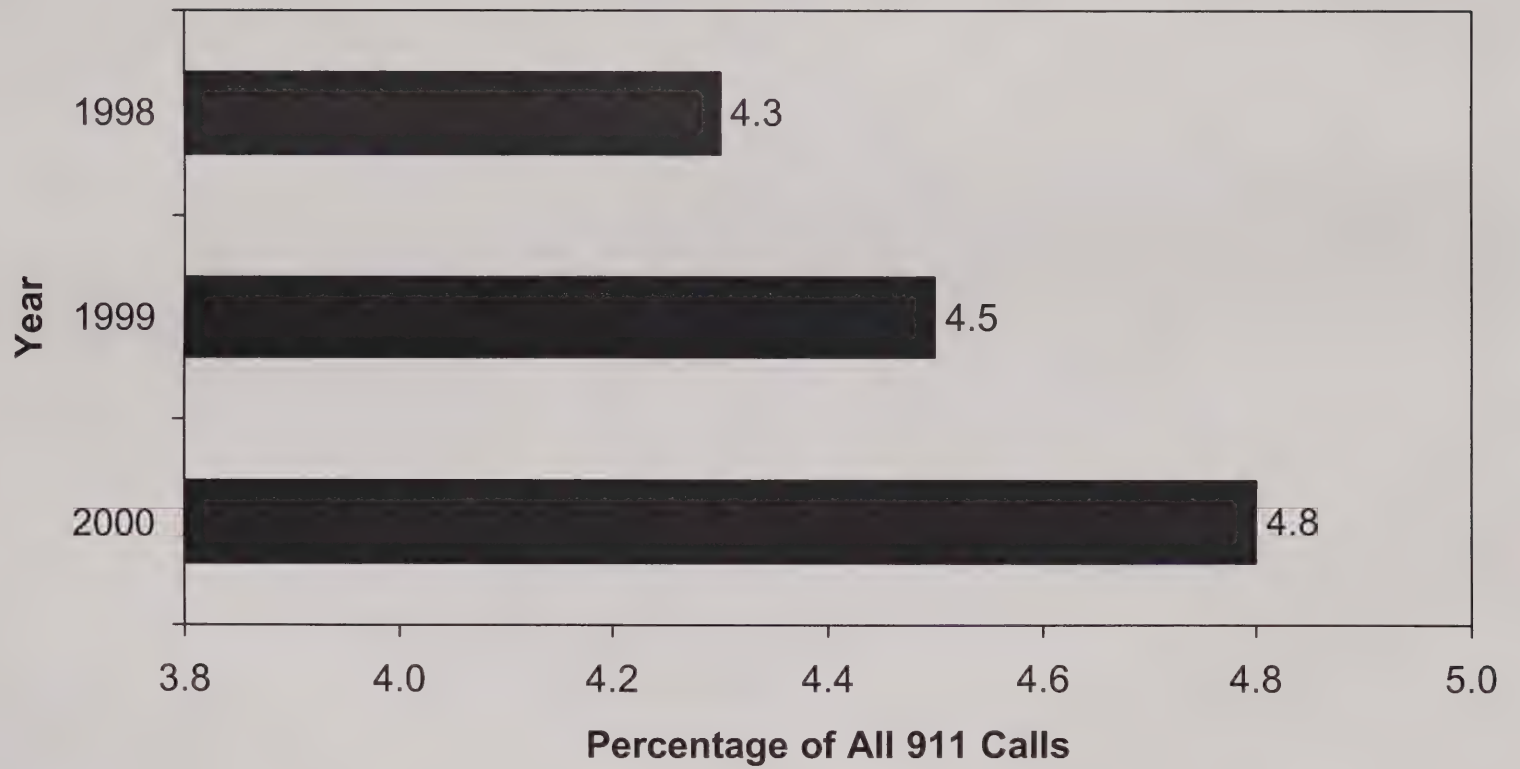

SOURCE: Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 1999, Boston Public Health Commission & Massachusetts Department of Public Health
ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

# Uninsured Population, Boston Adults, 1999




SOURCE: Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 1999, Boston Public Health Commission & Massachusetts Department of Public Health
ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

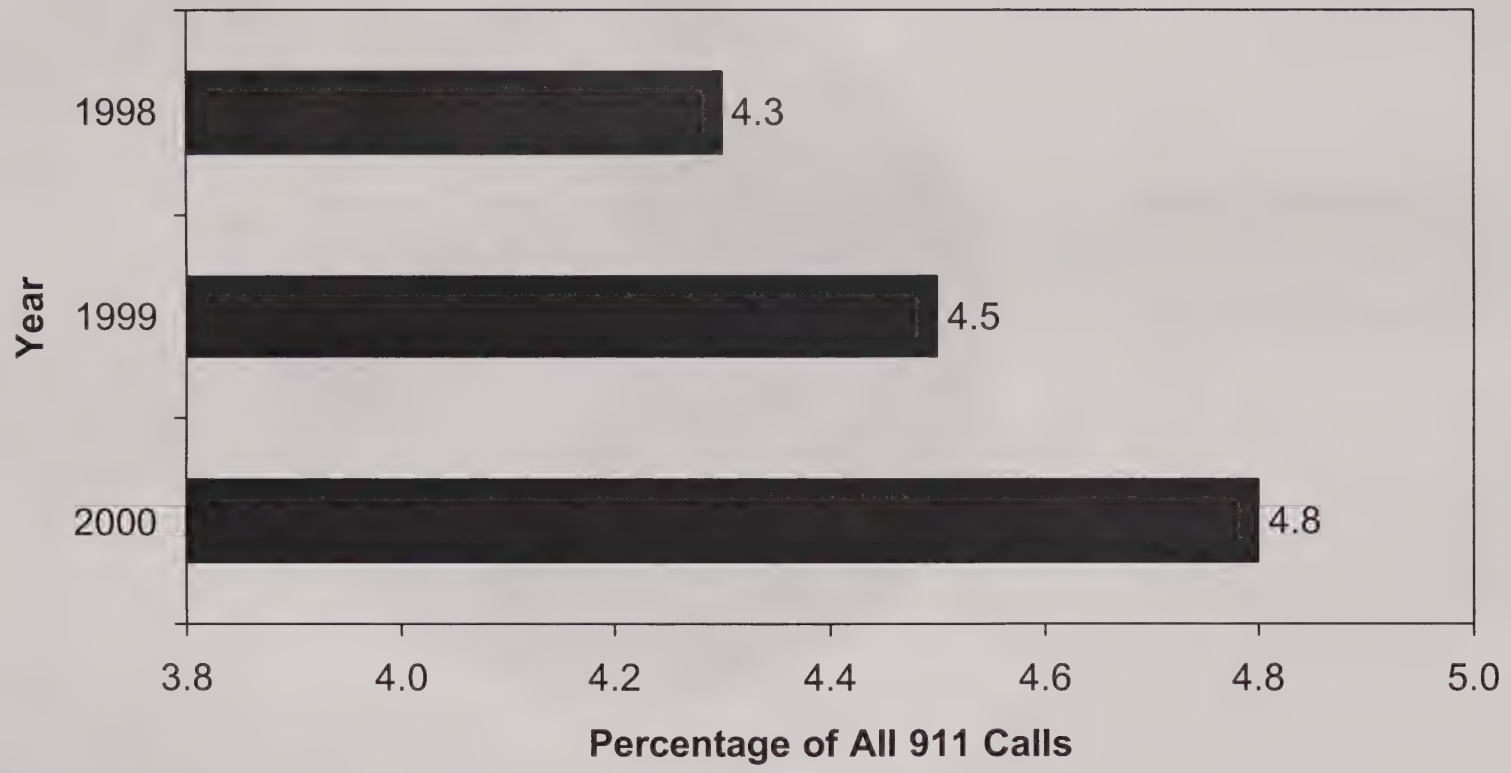
# Calls About "Emotionally Disturbed Persons" to Boston Emergency Medical Services, by Year, 1998-2000




SOURCE: Boston Emergency Medical Services

ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commision, Research and Technology Services

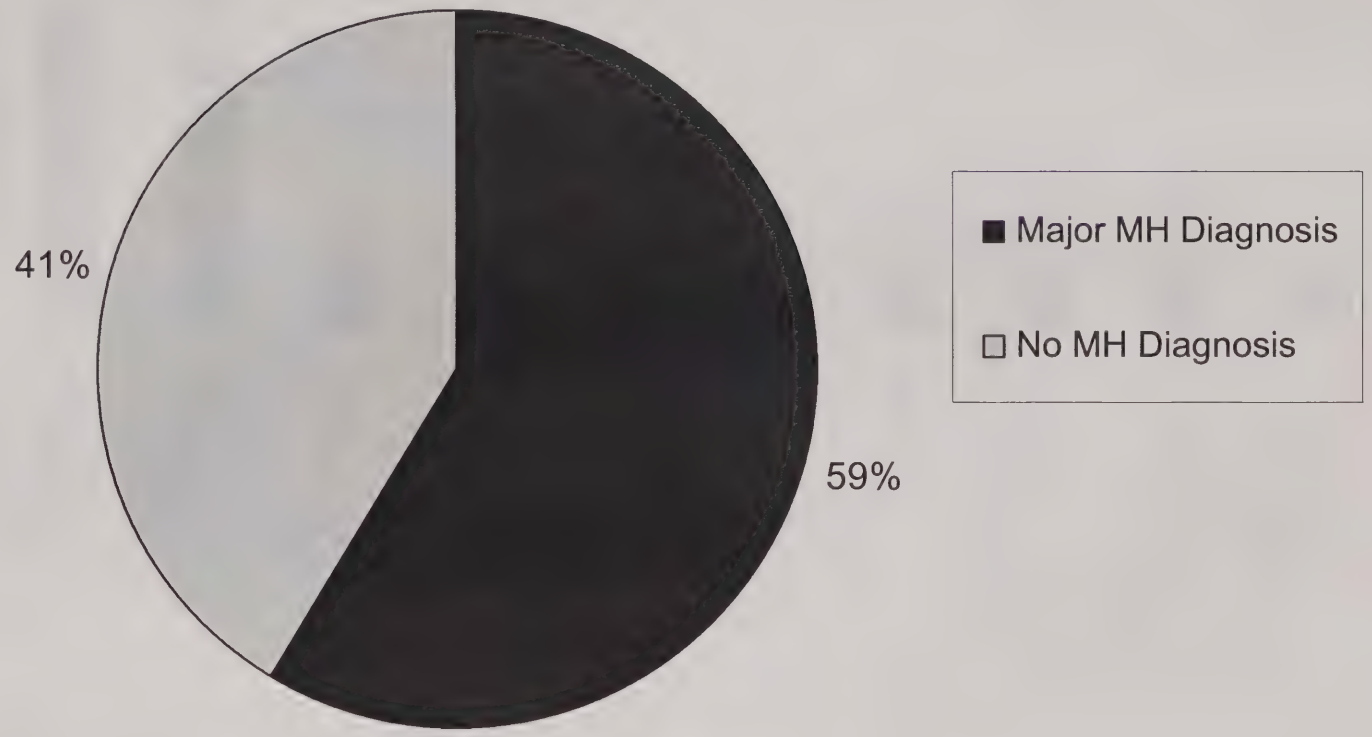
# Calls About "Emotionally Disturbed Persons" to Boston Emergency Medical Services, by Year, 1998-2000




SOURCE: Boston Emergency Medical Services

ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commision, Research and Technology Services

# Prevalence of Mental Illness Among Homeless Population from McInnis House, Boston Health Care for the Homeless, January - July 2000

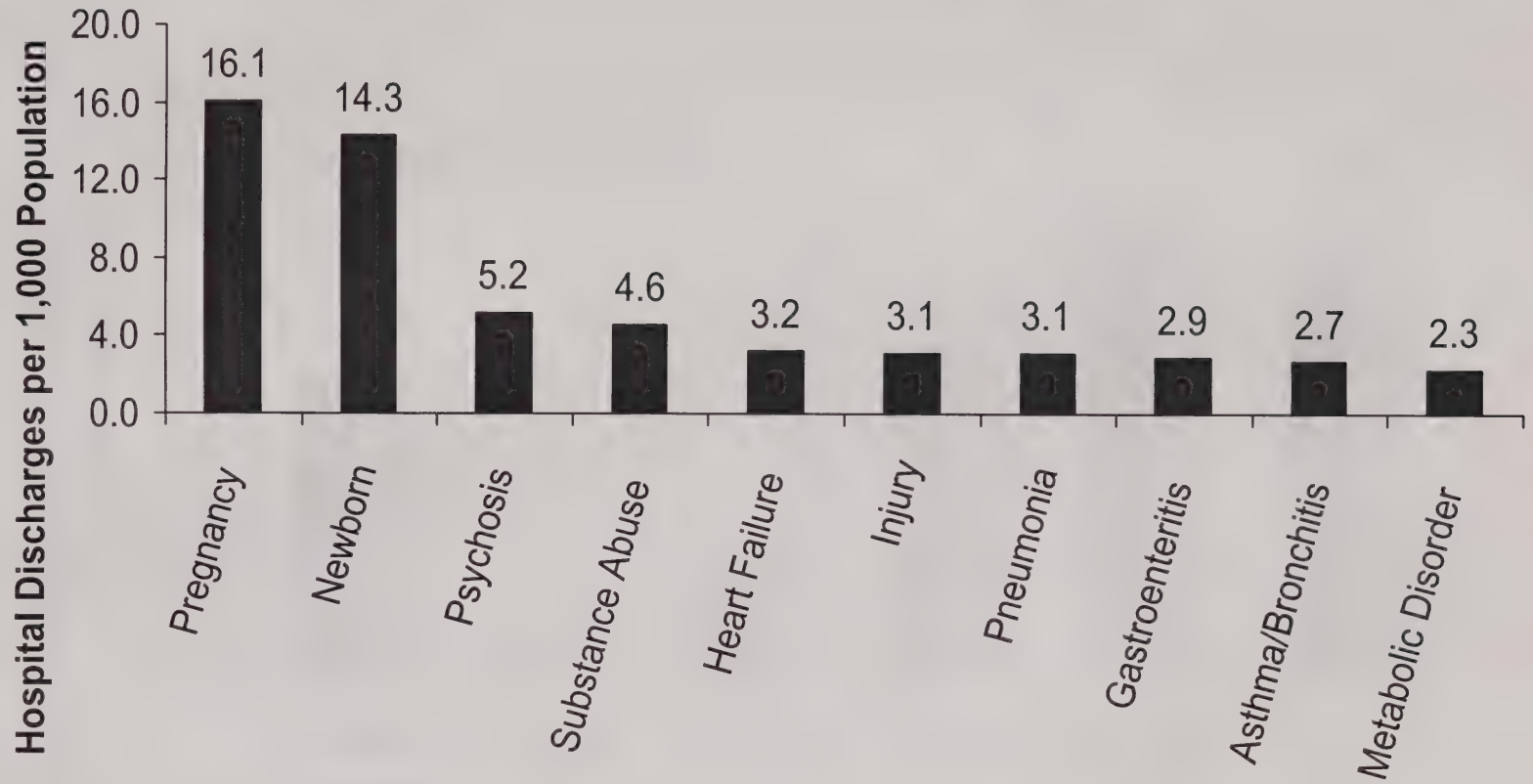



**N=213**

SOURCE: Boston Health Care for the Homeless, 2000

ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

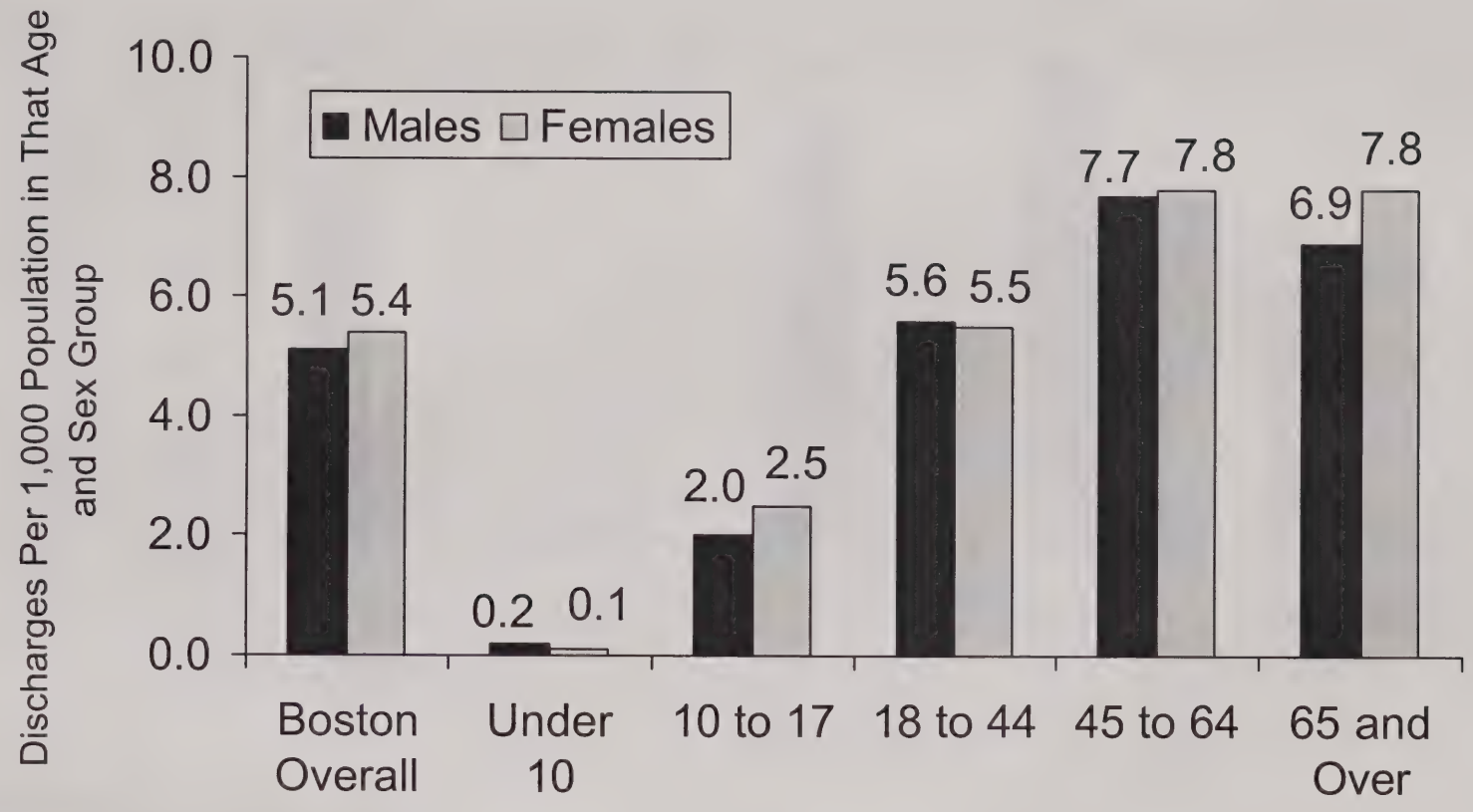
# Leading Causes of Hospitalization, Average Annual Rates, Boston, 1994-1999




DATA SOURCE: 1997-1999 Acute Hospital Case Mix, Massachusetts Division of Health Care Finance and Policy; 1994-1996 hospital discharge data, Massachusetts Health Data Consortium, Inc.

DATA ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

# Age-Adjusted Hospital Discharge Rates for Psychosis by Age and Sex, Boston, 1994-1999




**N=17,598 hospital discharges**

DATA SOURCE: 1997-1999 Acute Hospital Case Mix, Massachusetts Division of Health Care Finance and Policy; 1994-1996 hospital discharge data, Massachusetts Health Data Consortium, Inc.
DATA ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

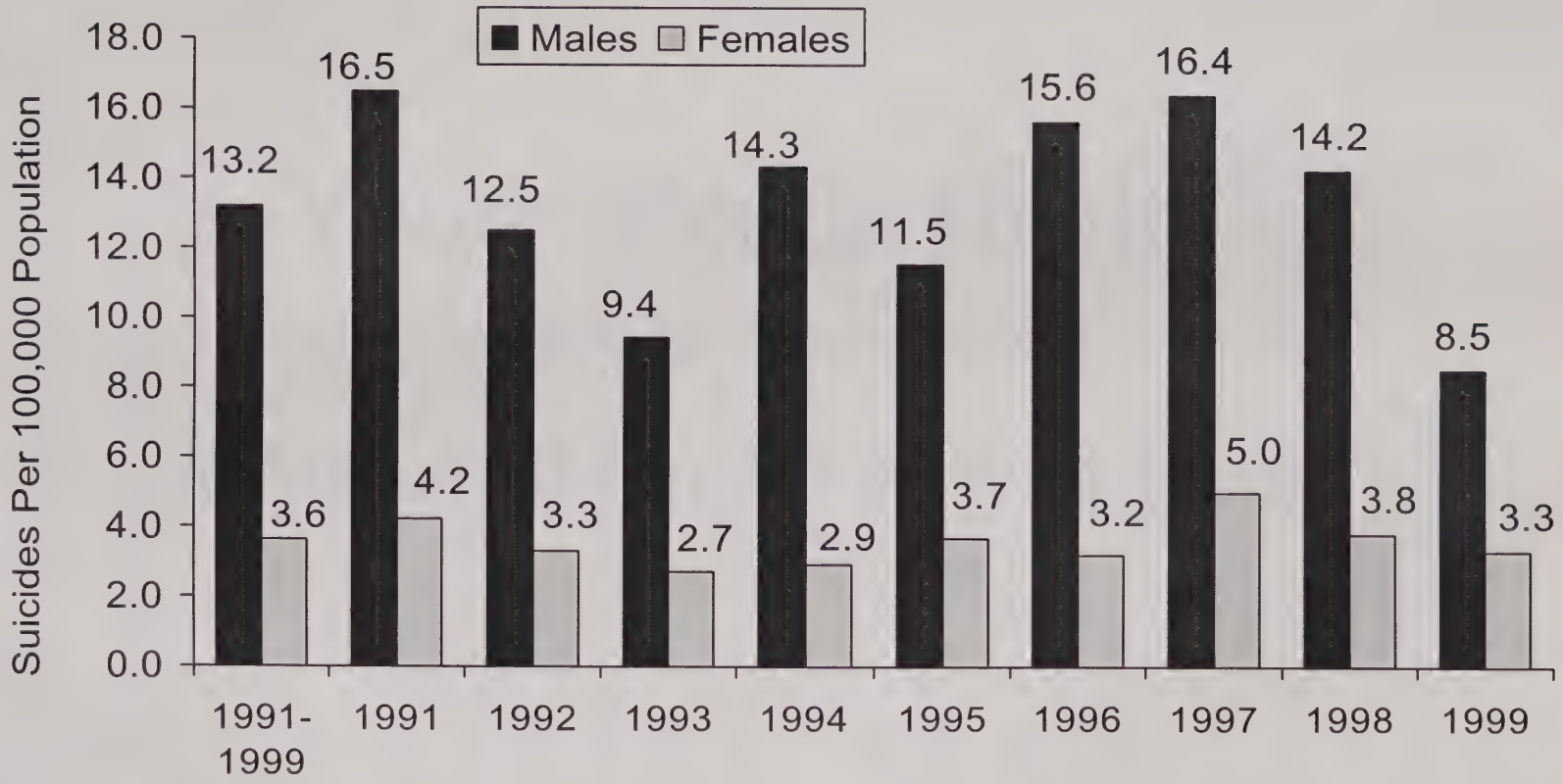
# Age-Adjusted Hospital Discharge Rates for Substance Abuse by Age and Sex, Boston, 1994-1999

**N=15,483 hospital discharges**

**NOTE: There were too few hospital discharges among children under 10 to permit rate calculations.**

DATA SOURCE: 1997-1999 Acute Hospital Case Mix, Massachusetts Division of Health Care Finance and Policy; 1994-1996 hospital discharge data, Massachusetts Health Data Consortium, Inc.
DATA ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

# Age-Adjusted Suicide Mortality Rates by Sex and Year, Boston, 1991-1999



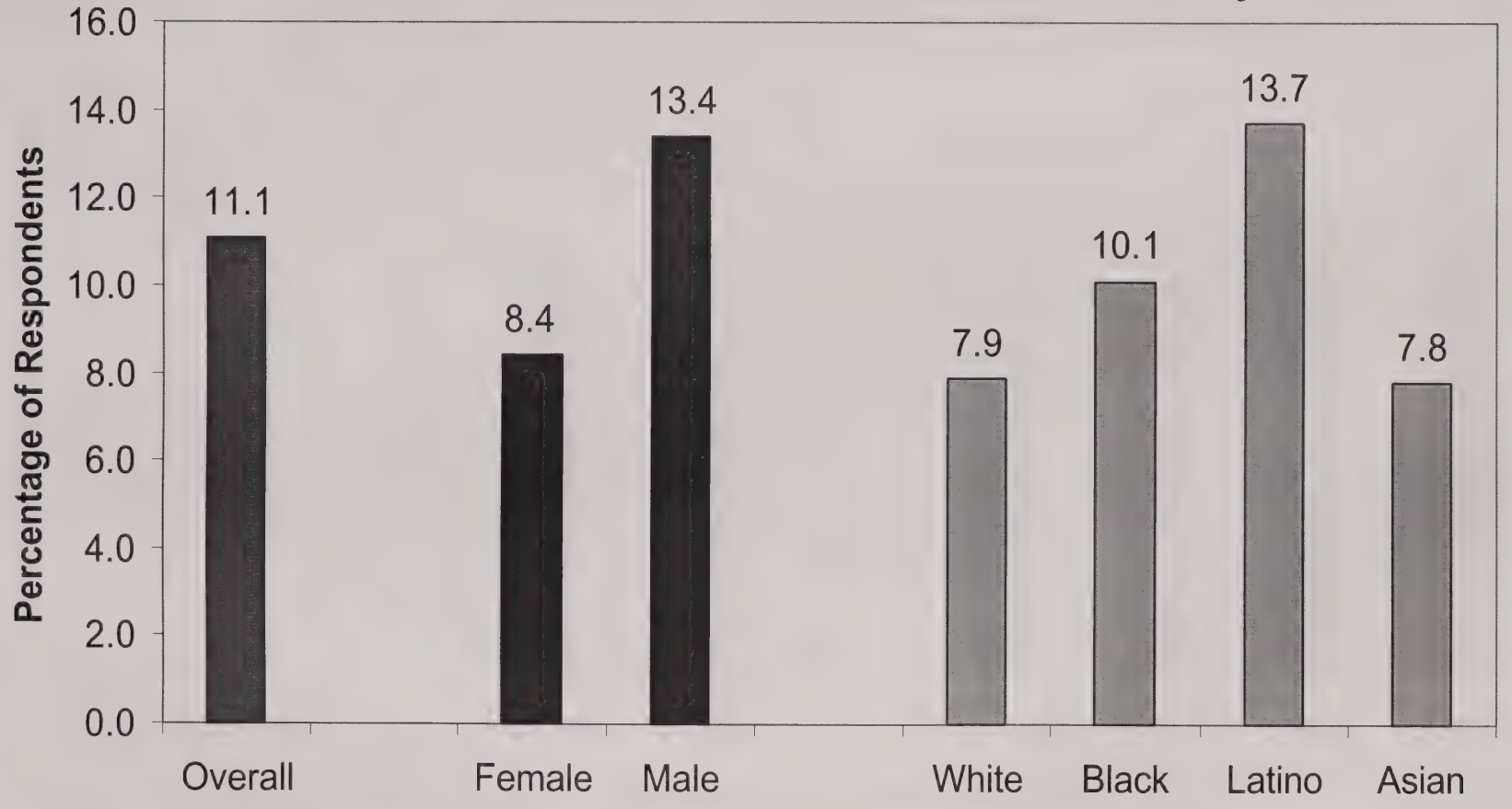

**N=308 suicides among males and 90 suicides among females**

DATA SOURCE: Death records, 1991-1999, Massachusetts Department of Public Health
DATA ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

# Youth Mental Health

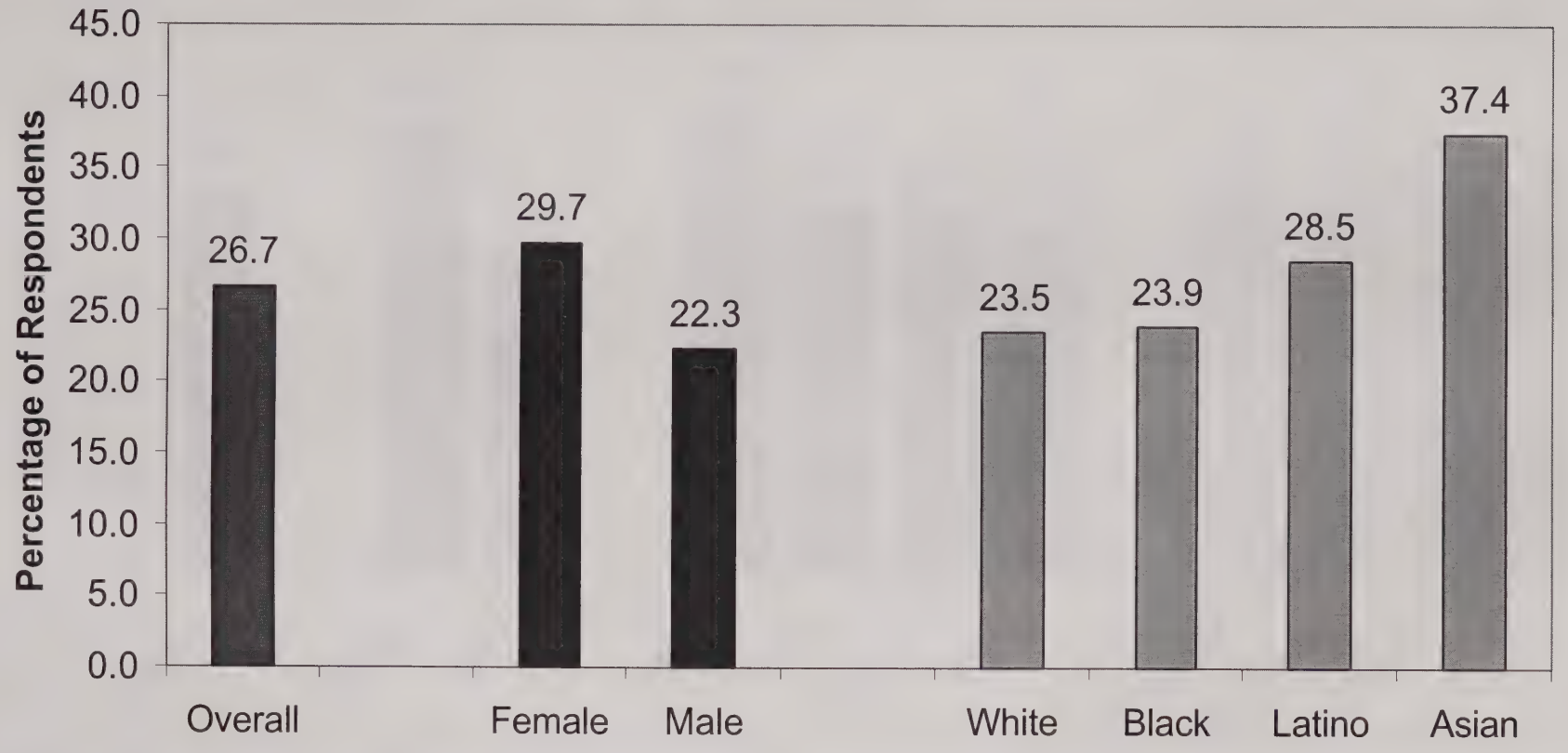
## Measures of Emotional Well-Being

# Never or Rarely Feel Hopeful About Future (Self-Reported), Boston Youth in Summer School and Recreation Programs, Boston Youth Survey, 2000



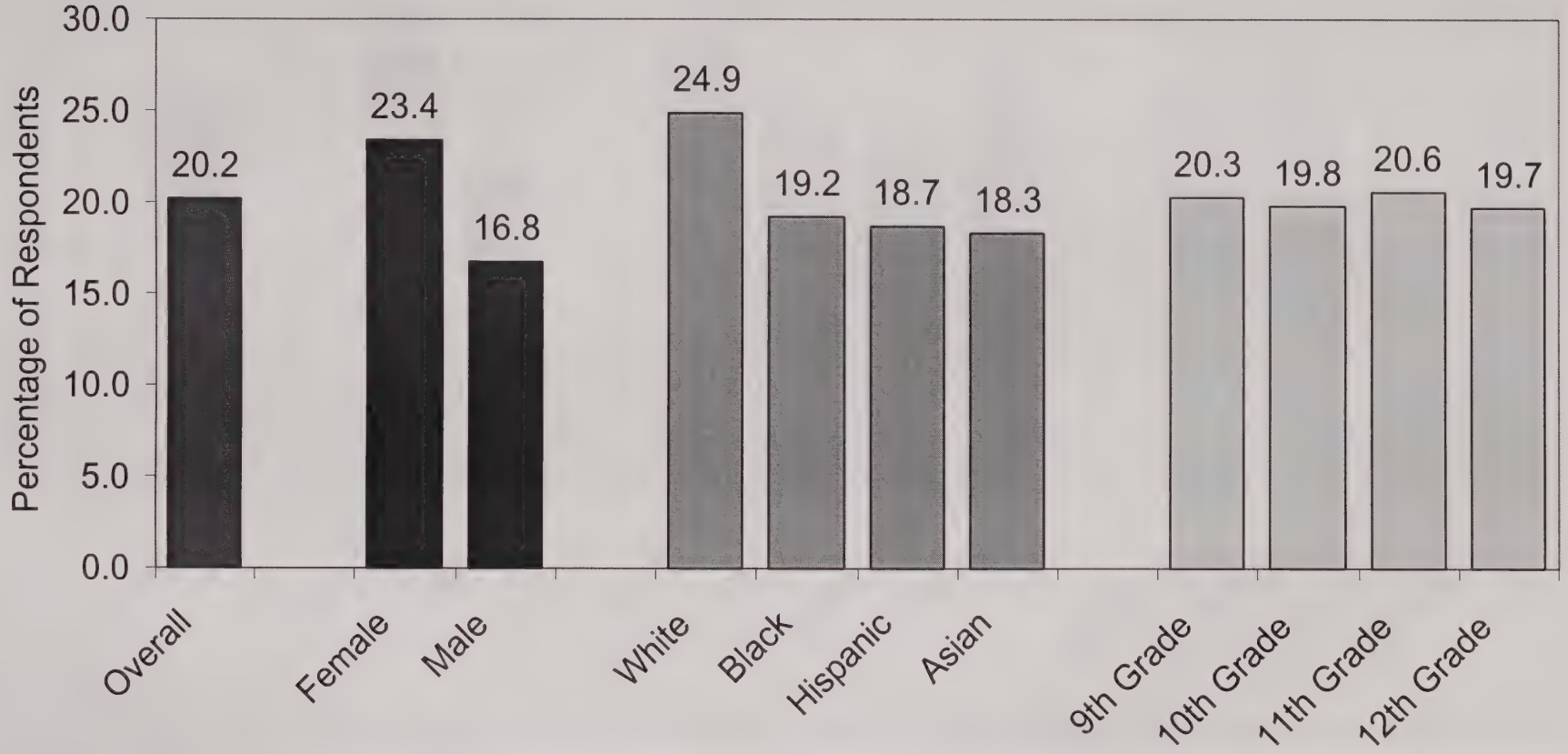

SOURCE: City of Boston, Office of Community Partnerships, Boston Youth Survey, 2000
ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

# Self-Reported Depression Among Boston Youth in Summer School and Recreation Programs, Boston Youth Survey, 2000




SOURCE: City of Boston, Office of Community Partnerships, Boston Youth Survey, 2000
ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

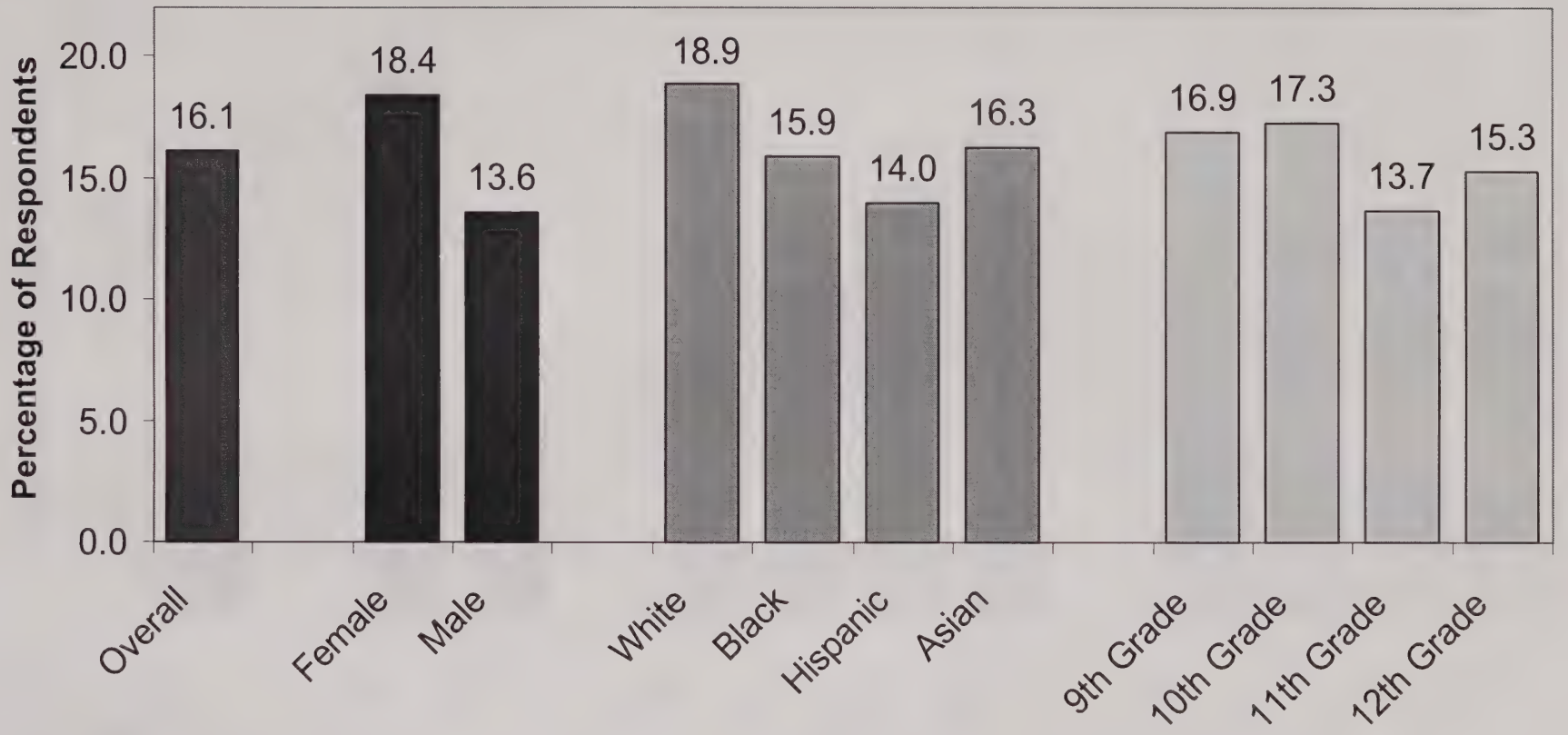
# Boston High School Students Who Seriously Considered Suicide in Past Year, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 1999




SOURCE: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), 1999, Massachusetts Departments of Education and Public Health

ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

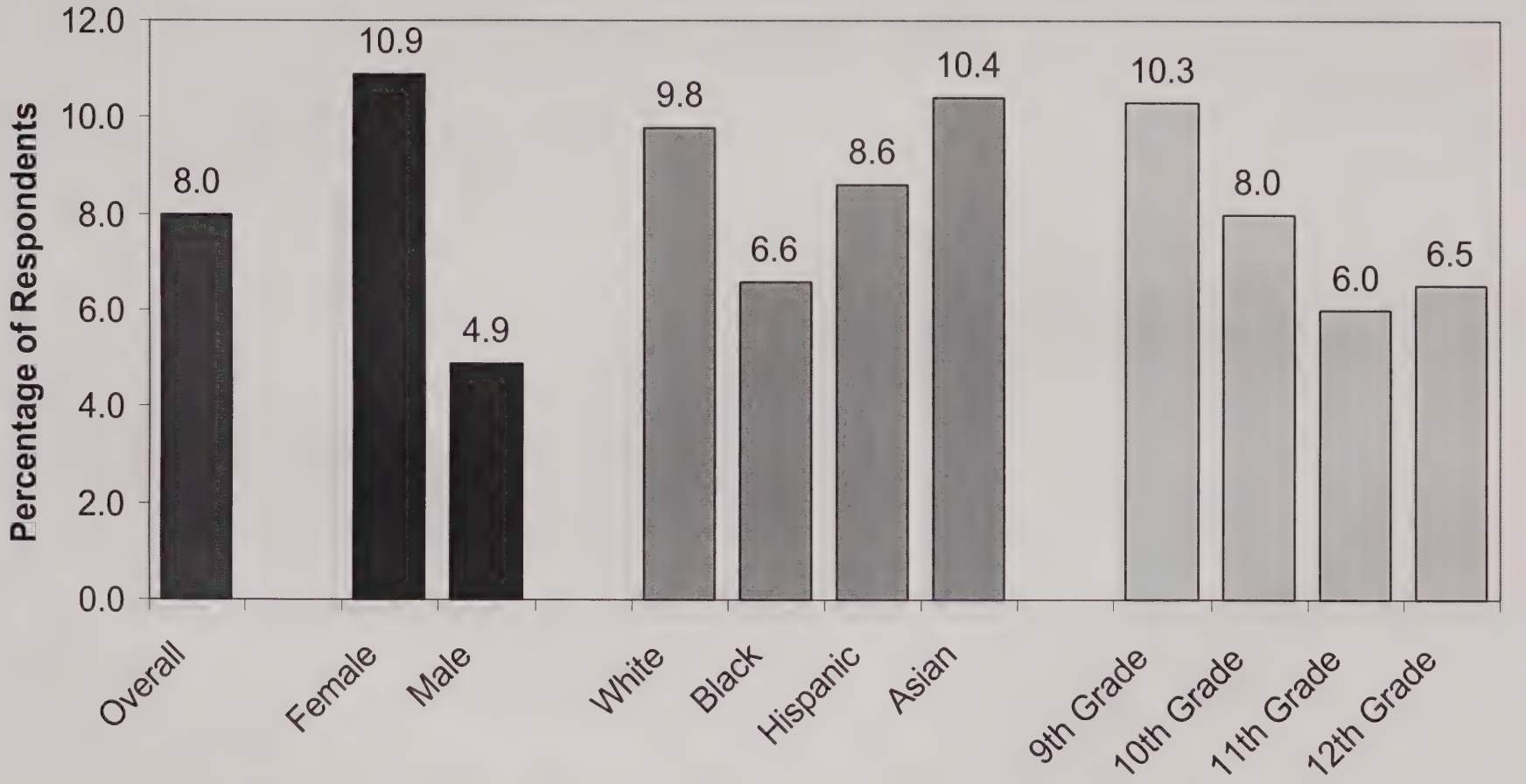
# Boston High School Students Who Made a Suicide Plan in Past Year, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 1999




SOURCE: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), 1999, Massachusetts Departments of Education and Public Health

ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

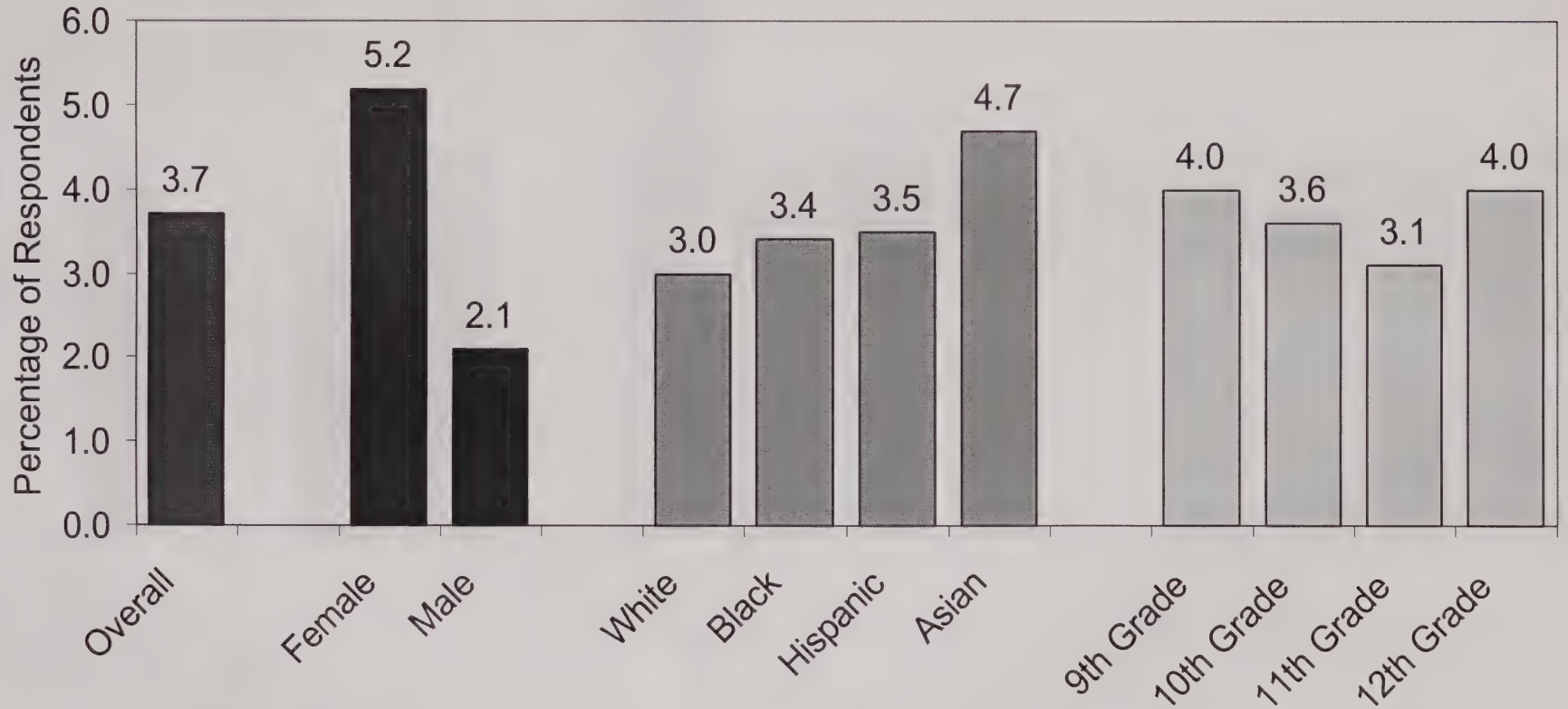
# Boston High School Students Who Attempted Suicide in Past Year, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 1999




SOURCE: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), 1999, Massachusetts Departments of Education and Public Health

ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

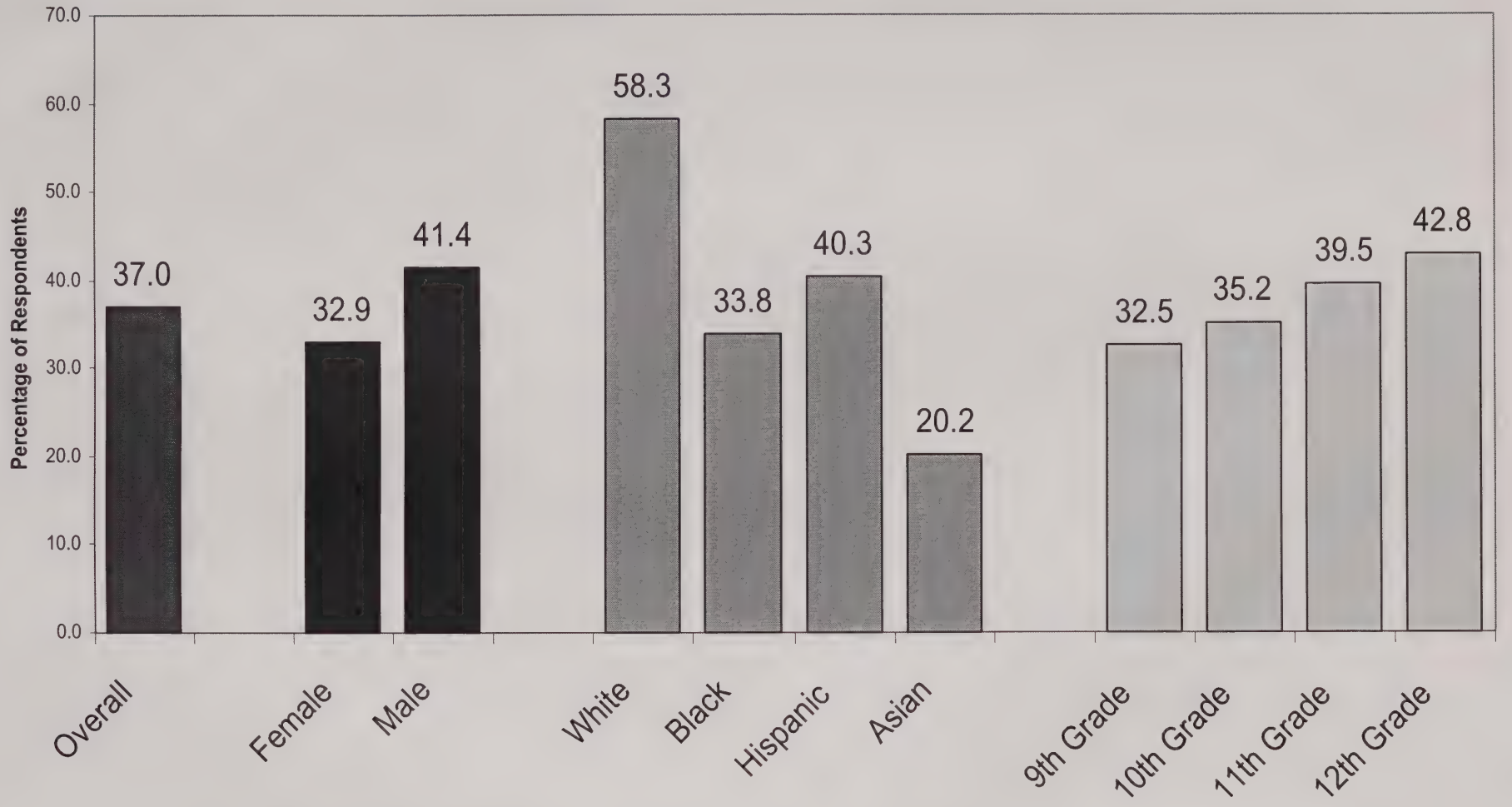
# Boston High School Students Who Received Medical Attention for Suicide Attempt in Past Year, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 1999




SOURCE: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), 1999, Massachusetts Departments of Education and Public Health

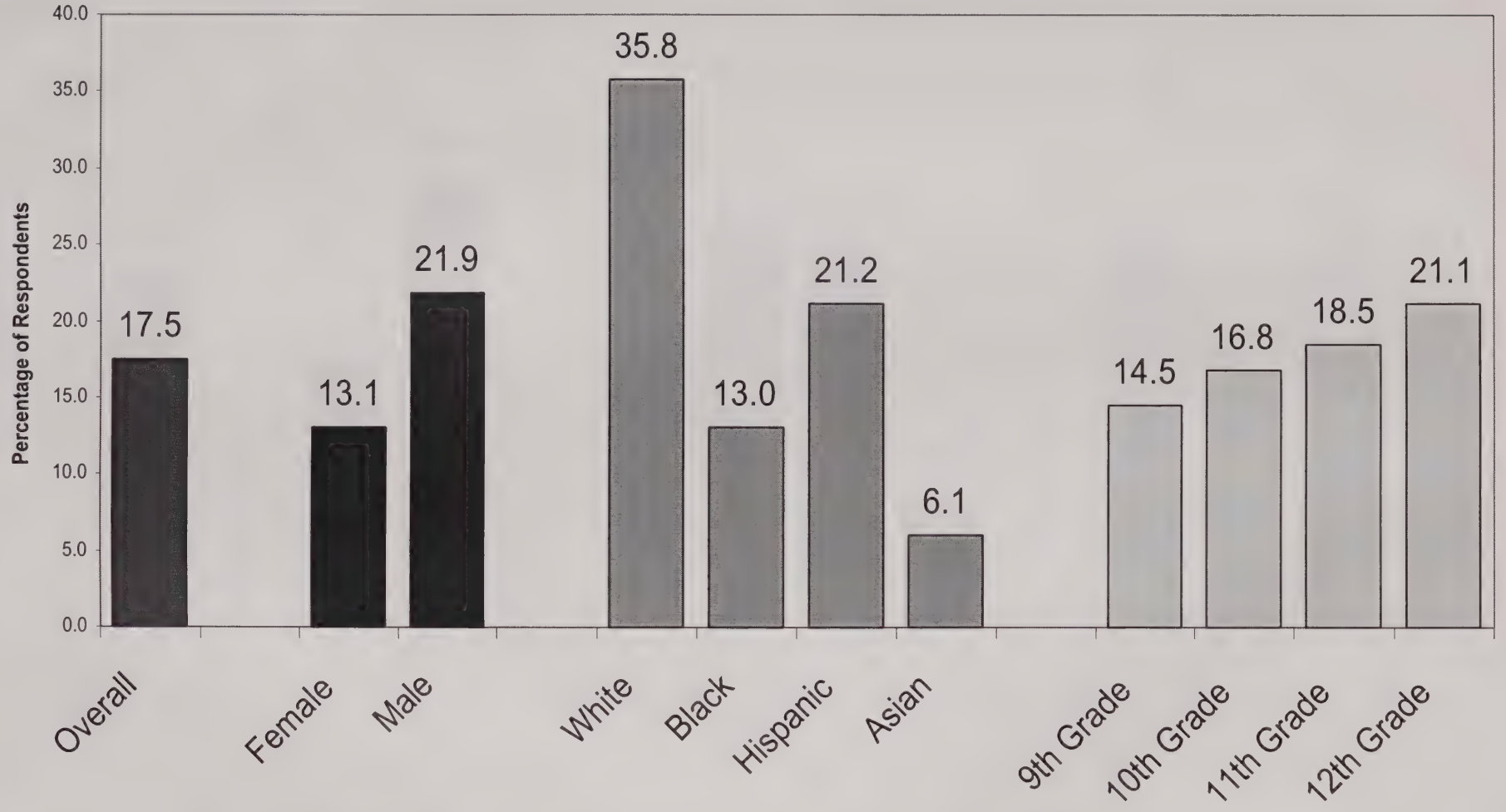
ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

# Boston High School Students Who Have Used Alcohol in the Past 30 Days, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 1999



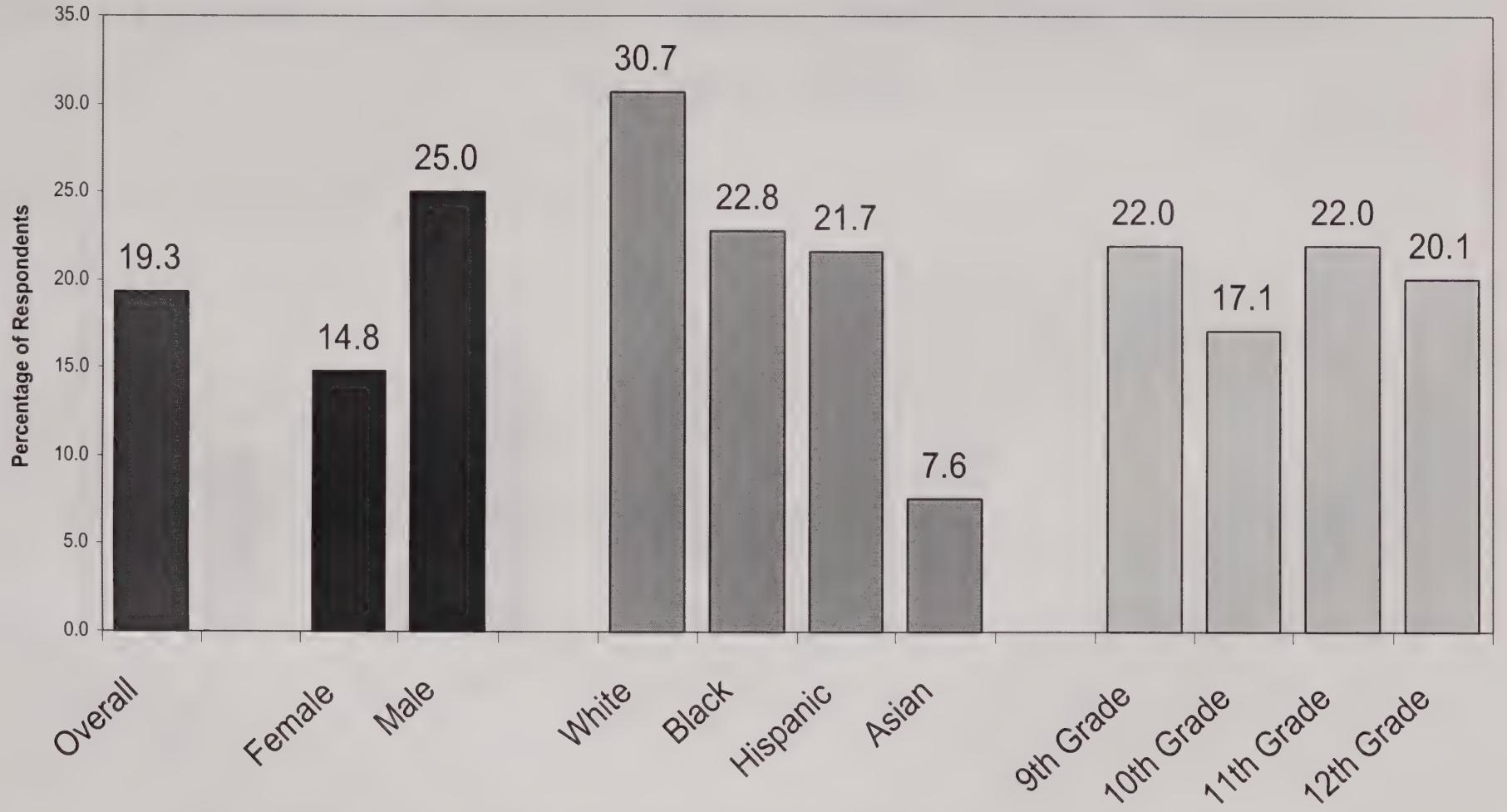

SOURCE: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), 1999, Massachusetts Departments of Education and Public Health
ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

# Binge Drinking Among Boston High School Students in the Past 30 Days, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 1999



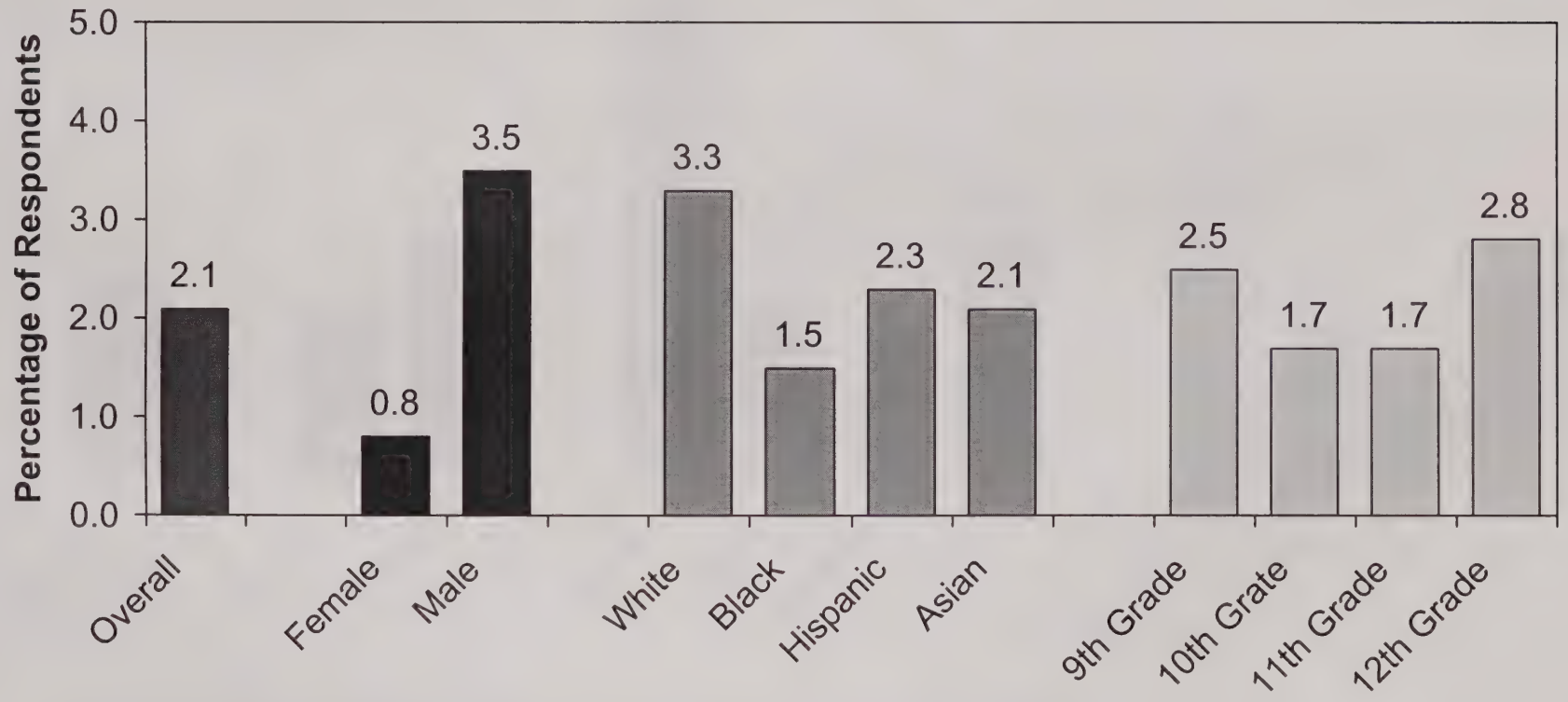

SOURCE: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), 1999, Massachusetts Departments of Education and Public Health
ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

# Boston High School Students Marijuana Use in the Past 30 Days, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 1999




SOURCE: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), 1999, Massachusetts Departments of Education and Public Health
ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

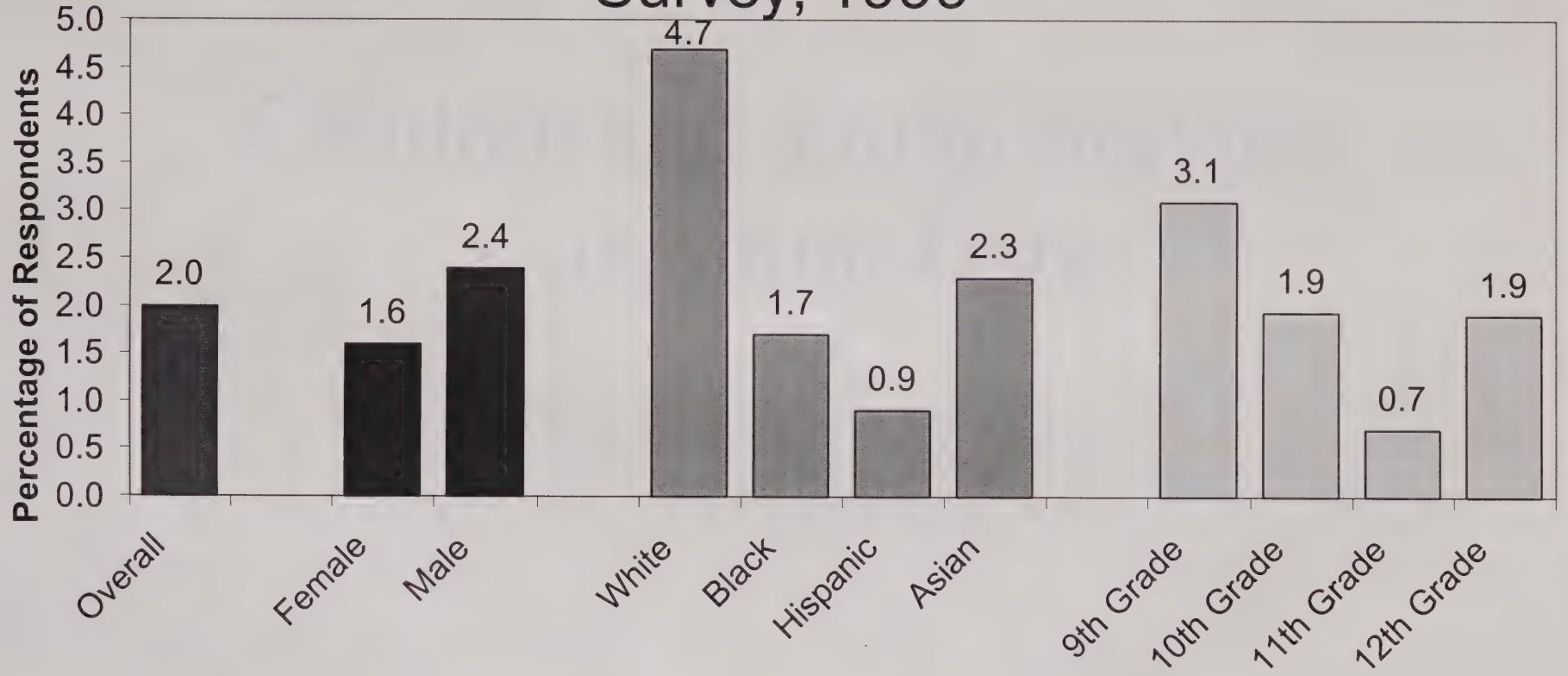
# Boston High School Students Who Used Cocaine in Past 30 Days, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 1999




SOURCE: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), 1999, Massachusetts Departments of Education and Public Health

ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

# Boston High School Students Inhalant Use in the Past 30 Days, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 1999

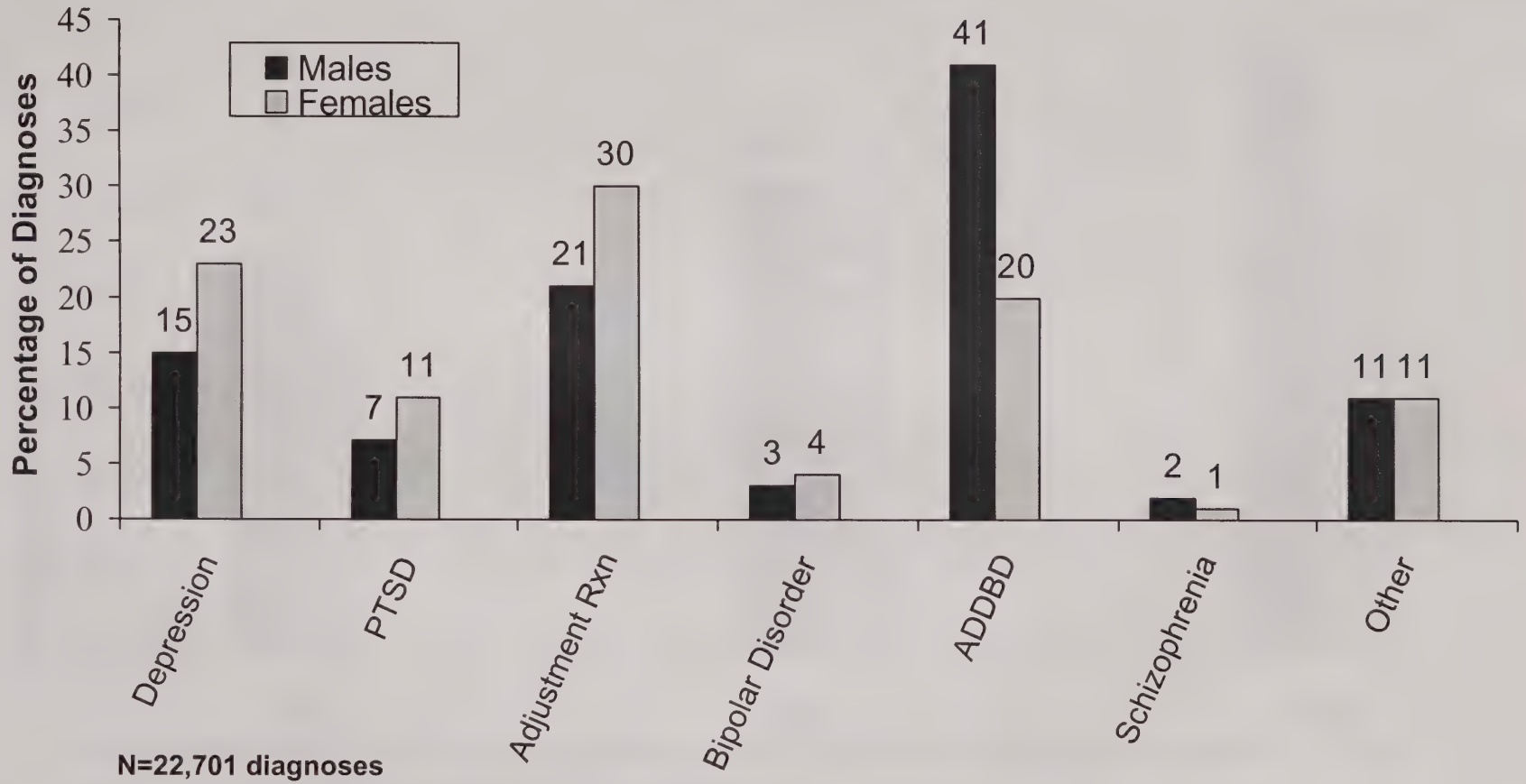



SOURCE: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), 1999, Massachusetts Departments of Education and Public Health
ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

# Children and Youth Service Utilization Data

# Children and Youth Service Utilization Data

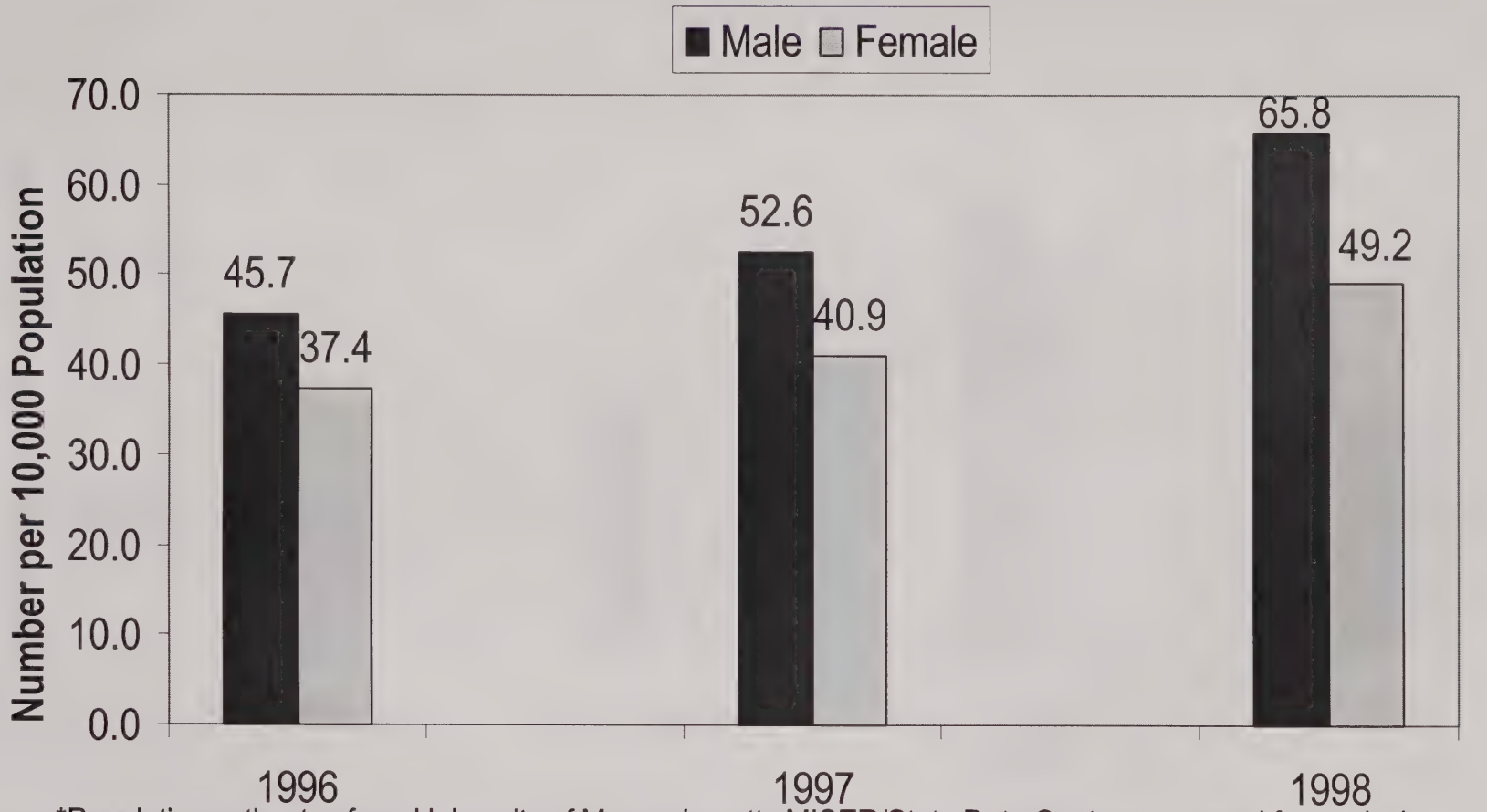
# Psychiatric Diagnoses for Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership Clients, Boston Residents <21 Years of Age, by Sex, 1996-1998




**N=22,701 diagnoses**

DATA SOURCE: Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership, 1999
DATA ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

# Boston Youth Seen by Boston Emergency Services Team (BEST), by Sex and Year, 1996-1998

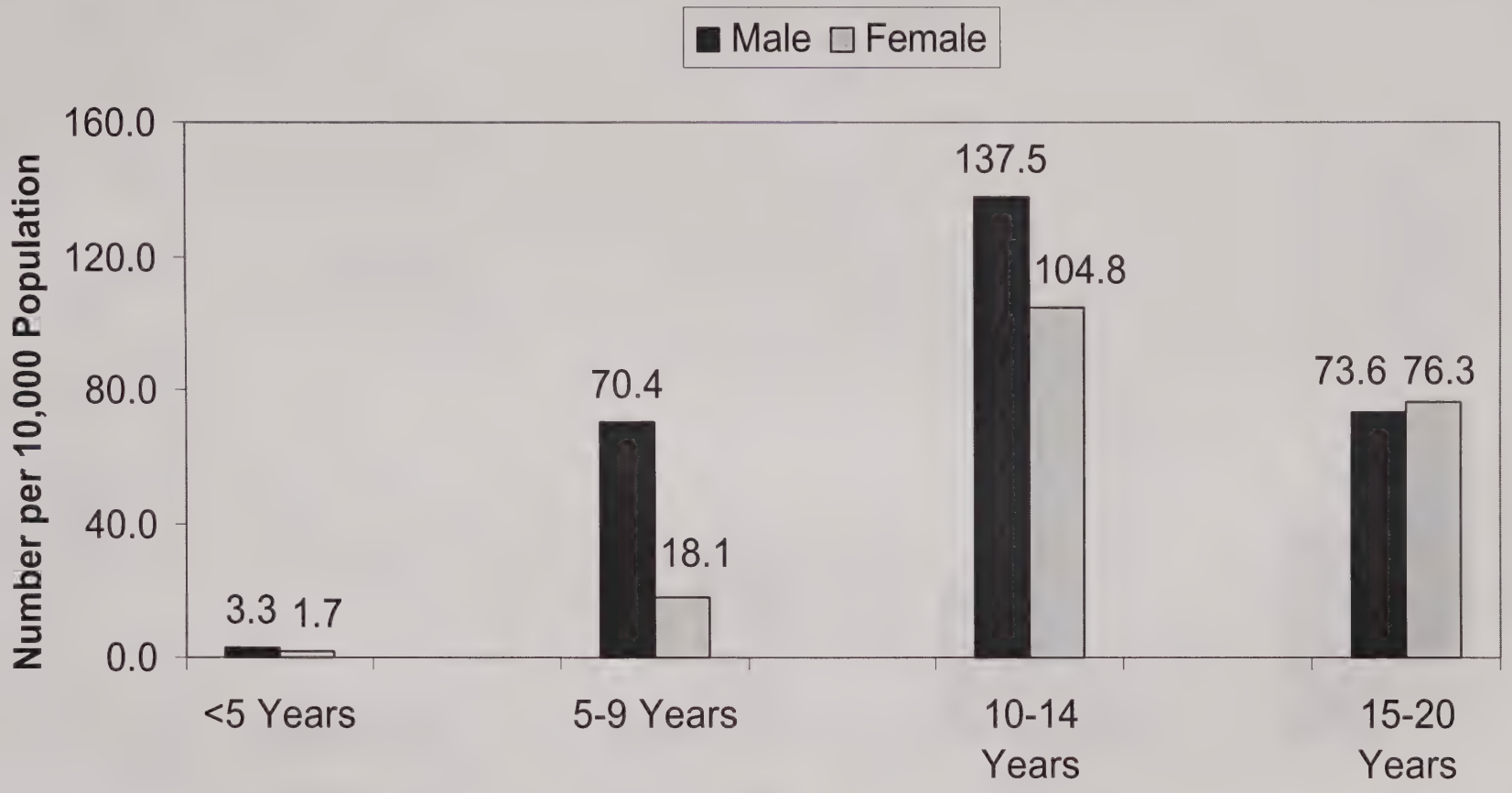



*Population estimates from University of Massachusetts MISER/State Data Center were used for analysis.

SOURCE: Boston Emergency Services Team, 1996-1998

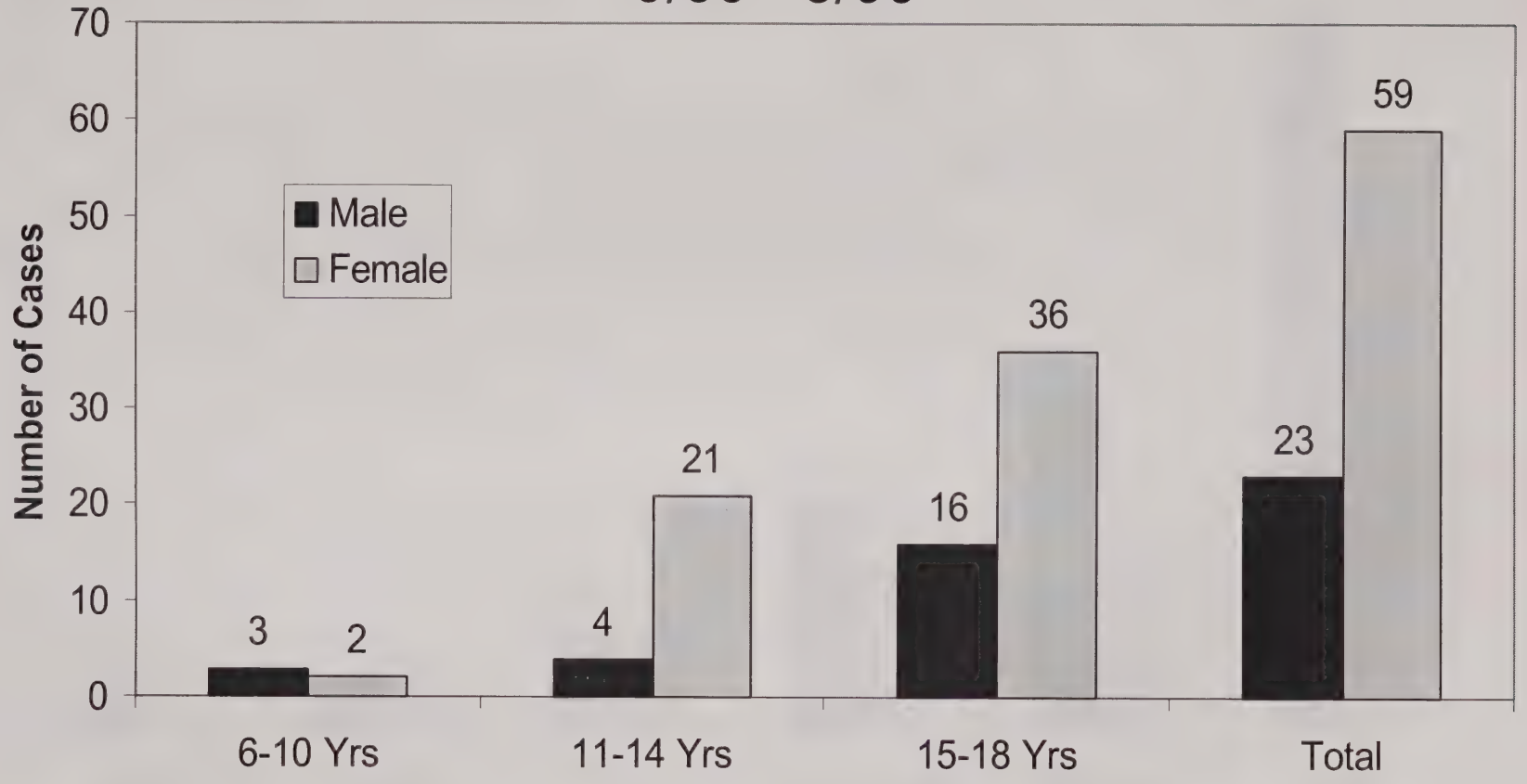
ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

# Boston Youth Seen by Boston Emergency Services Team (BEST), by Age Group and Sex, 1998



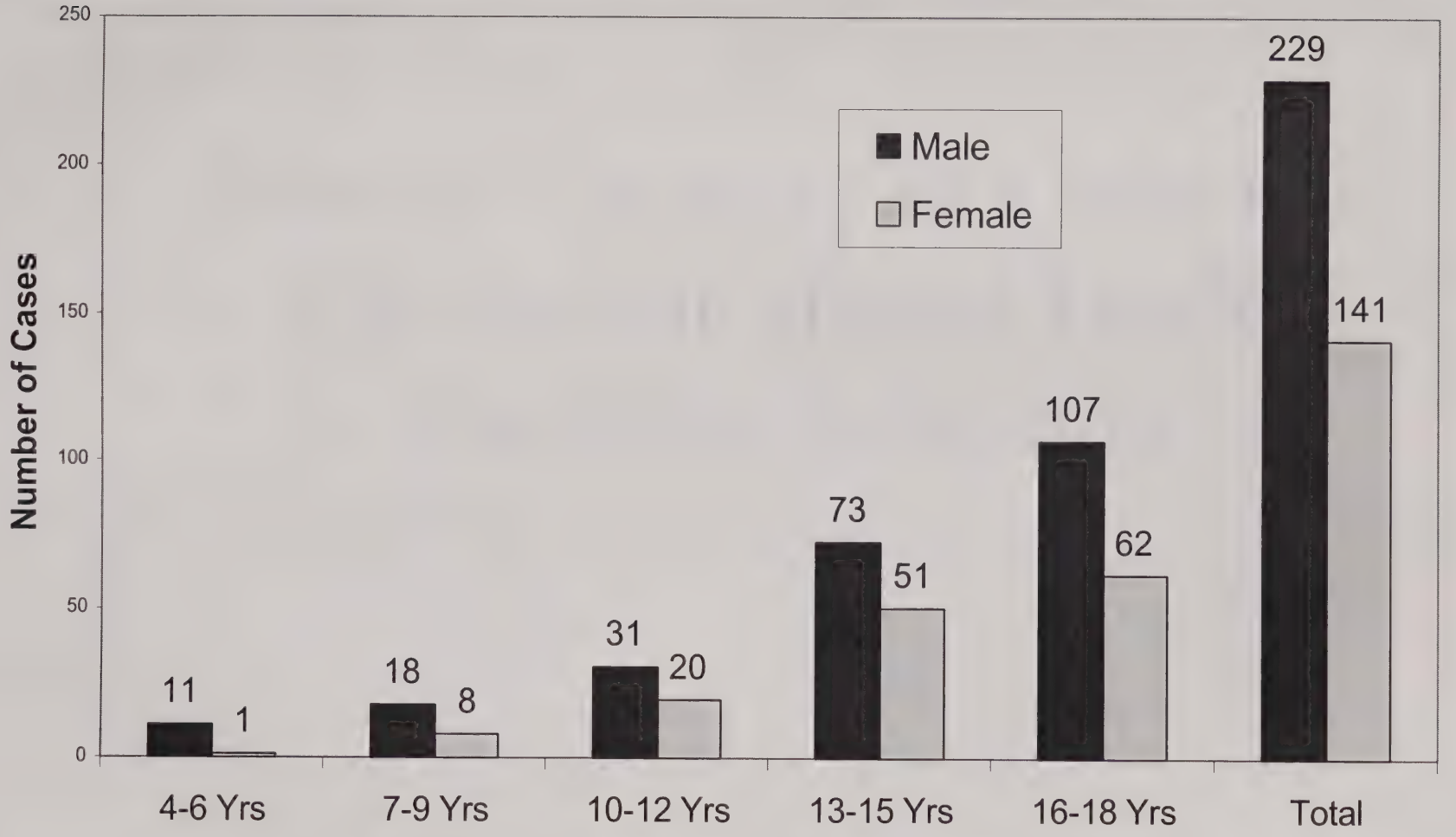

*Population estimates from University of Massachusetts MISER/State Data Center were used for analysis.
SOURCE: Boston Emergency Services Team, 1998
ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

# Boston Pediatric Emergency Department-Reported Suicide Attempt Cases by Sex, 9/99 - 8/00




SOURCE: Boston Emergency Department Surveillance System, Boston Public Health Commission, 2000
ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

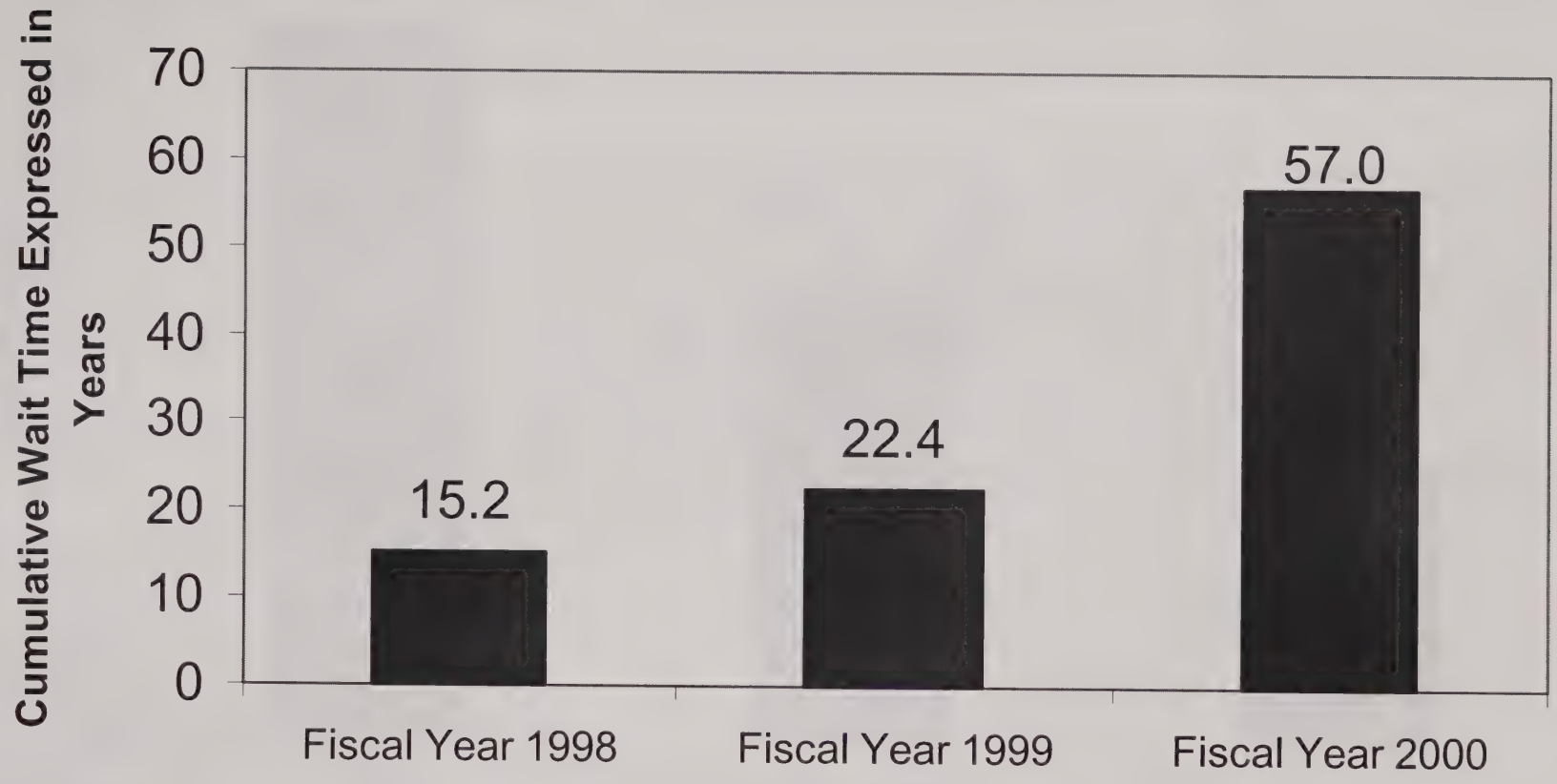
# Boston Pediatric Emergency Department-Reported Interpersonal Violence Cases by Sex, 9/1999 - 8/2000




SOURCE: Boston Emergency Department Surveillance System, Boston Public Health Commission, 2000
ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

# Service Capacity of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Facilities in Boston

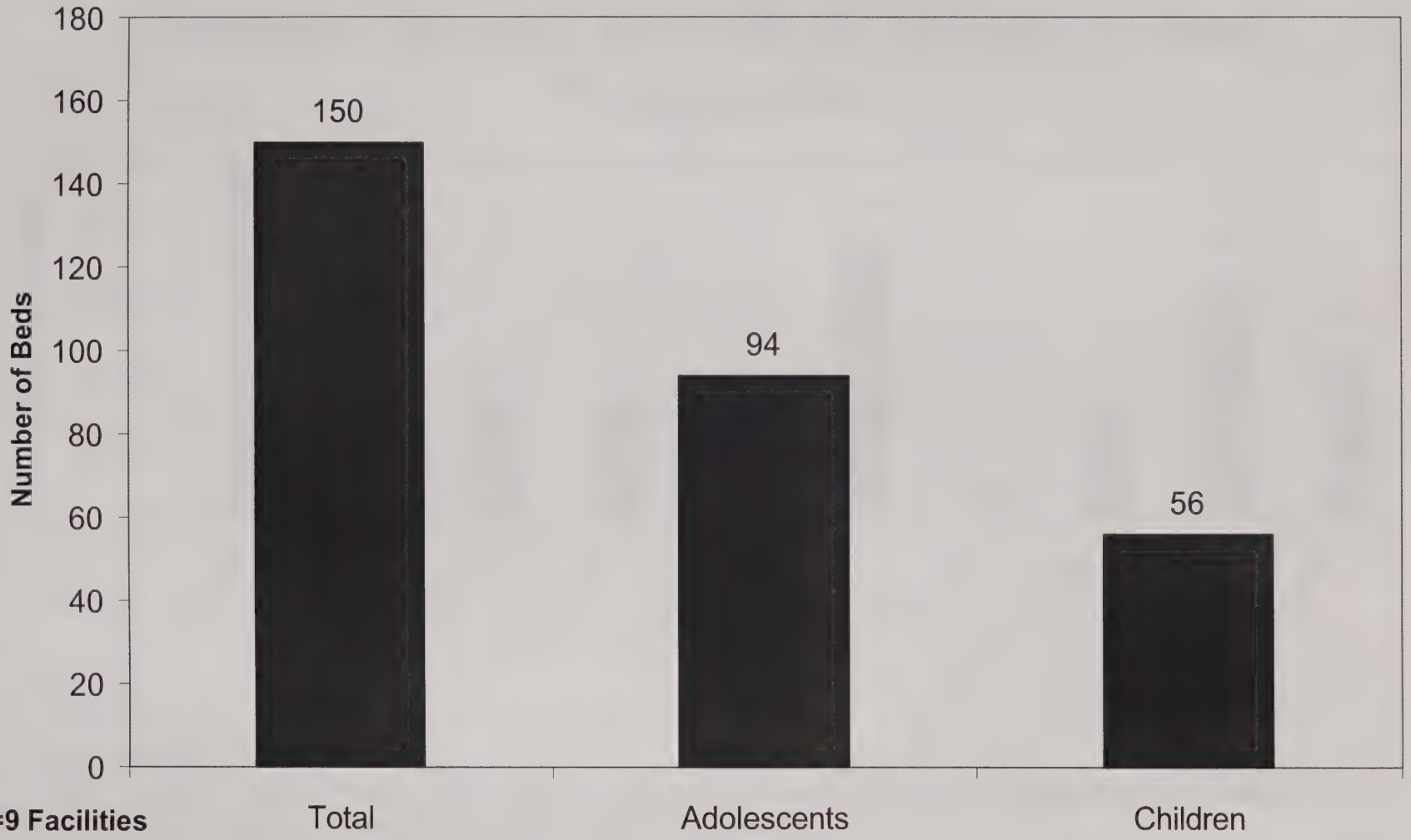
# Time Youth Mental Health Patients Wait in Inpatient Facilities Due to Lack of Community-Based Services, Massachusetts, 1998-2000




SOURCE: CARD Reports, Division of Medical Assistance, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1999-2000

ANALYSIS: Boston Medical Center, Dr. Joshua Sharfstein

# Number of Psychiatric Beds for Adolescents and Children, Boston, 2000

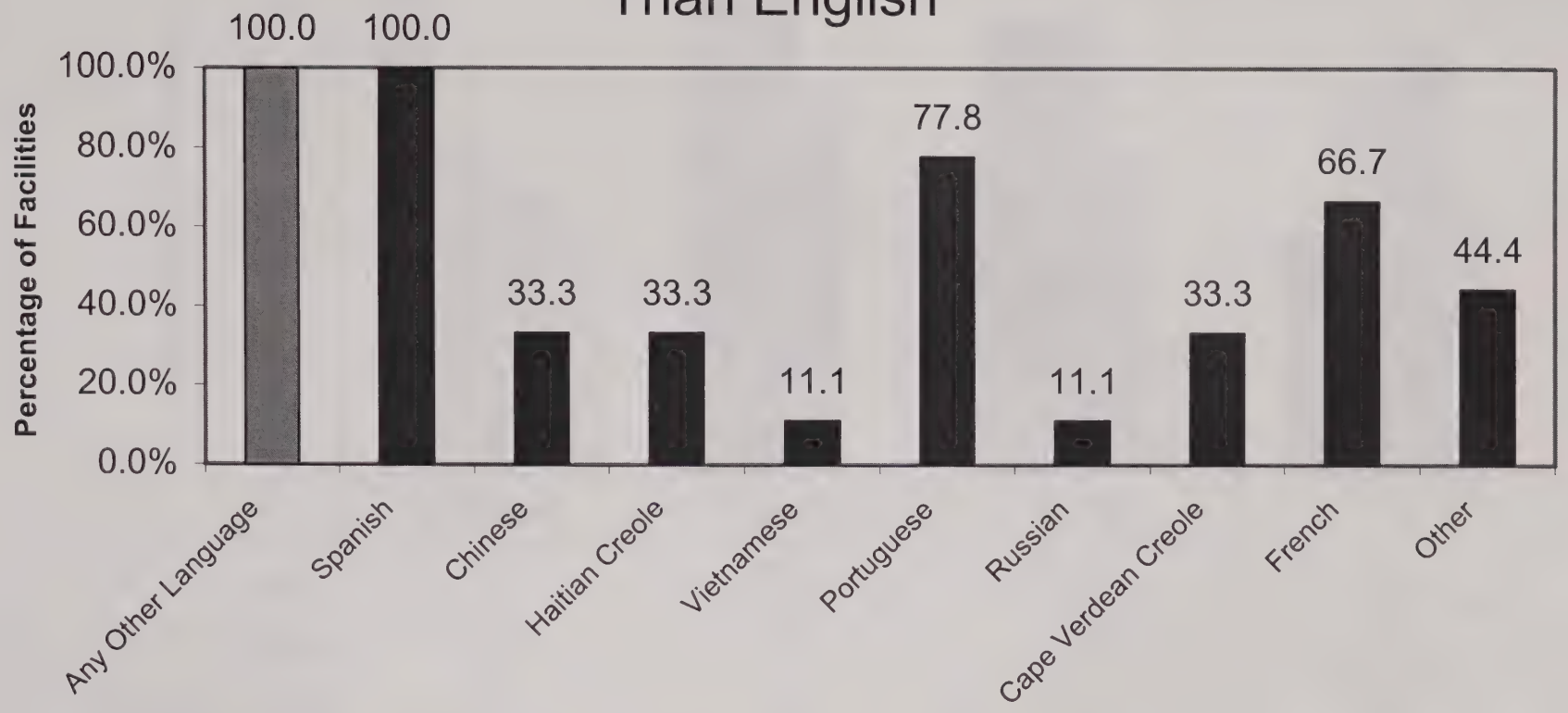



**N=9 Facilities**

SOURCE: Boston Public Health Commission Capacity Survey of Community-Based and Hospital-Based Mental Health Services for School-Aged Children and Adolescents Ages 5-18

ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

# Percentage of Inpatient Mental Health Facilities Providing Pediatric Services in Languages Other Than English

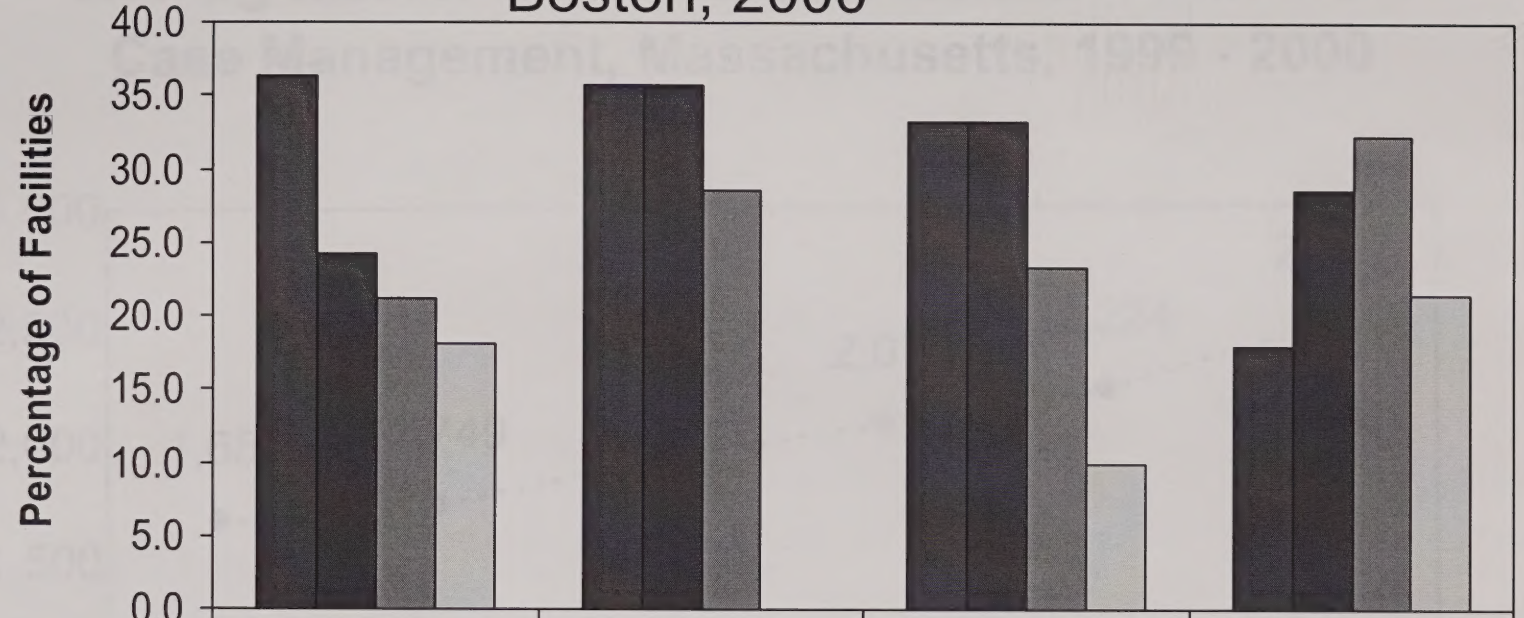



**N=9 Facilities**

DATA SOURCE: Boston Public Health Commission Capacity Survey of Community-Based and Hospital-Based Mental Health Services for School-Aged Children and Adolescents Ages 5-18.

DATA ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services.

# Average Wait Times At Outpatient Pediatric Mental Health Facilities, by Type of Therapeutic Service, Boston, 2000

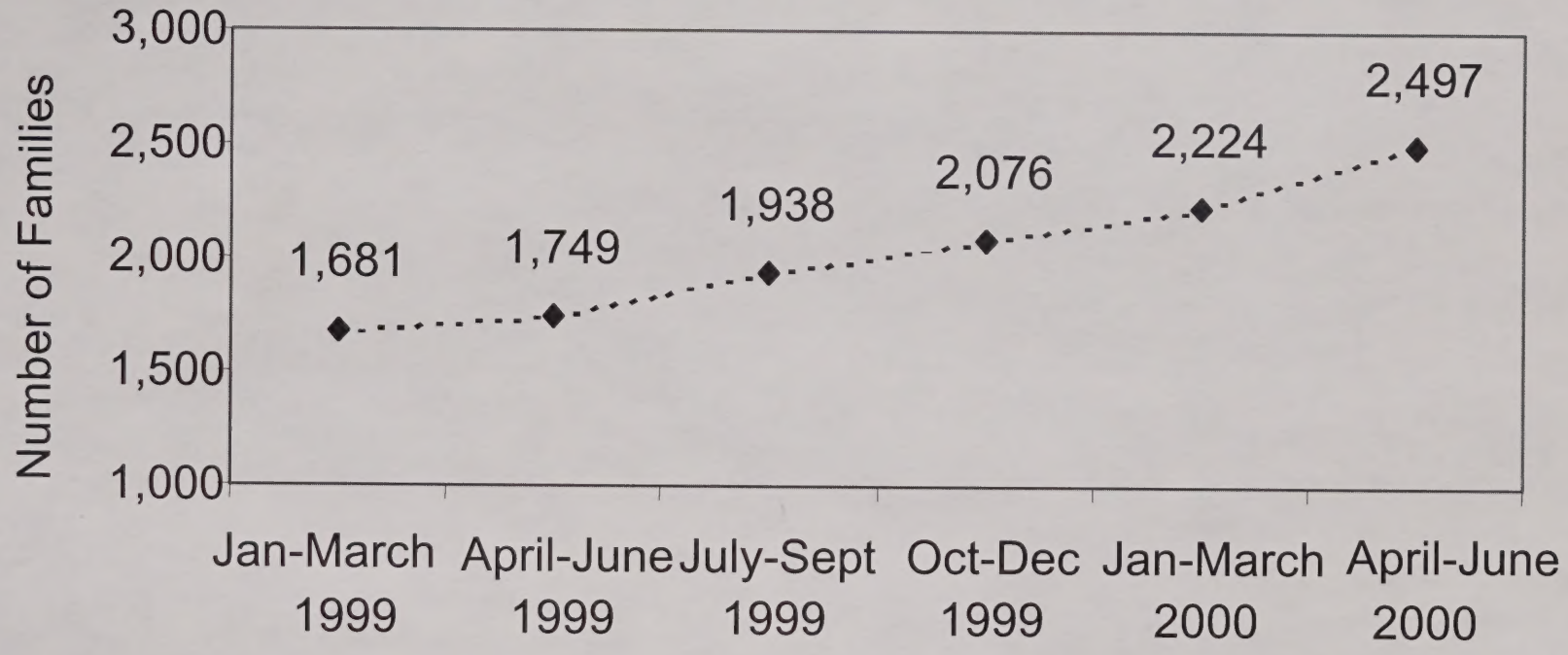



| | Individual | Group | Family | Rx |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1-10 Days | 36.3 | 35.7 | 33.3 | 17.9 |
| 11-15 Days | 24.2 | 35.7 | 33.3 | 28.6 |
| 16-30 Days | 21.2 | 28.6 | 23.4 | 32.2 |
| >30 Days | 18.1 | 0.0 | 9.9 | 21.5 |

DATA SOURCE: Boston Public Health Commission Capacity Survey of Community-Based and Hospital-Based Mental Health Services for School-Aged Children and Adolescents Ages 5-18
DATA ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission, Research and Technology Services

| | Individual | Group | Family | Rx |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1-10 Days | 39.3 | 35.7 | 33.3 | 17.9 |
| 11-15 Days | 24.2 | 25.7 | 33.3 | 28.6 |
| 16-30 Days | 21.2 | 28.6 | 23.4 | 32.2 |
| >30 Days | 18.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 21.5 |

## Waiting List for Department of Mental Health Child Case Management, Massachusetts, 1999 - 2000




SOURCE: Department of Mental Health, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1999 - 2000

ANALYSIS: Boston Medical Center, Dr. Joshua Sharfstein